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SOME POPULAR PHILOSOPHY

GEORGE H. LONG

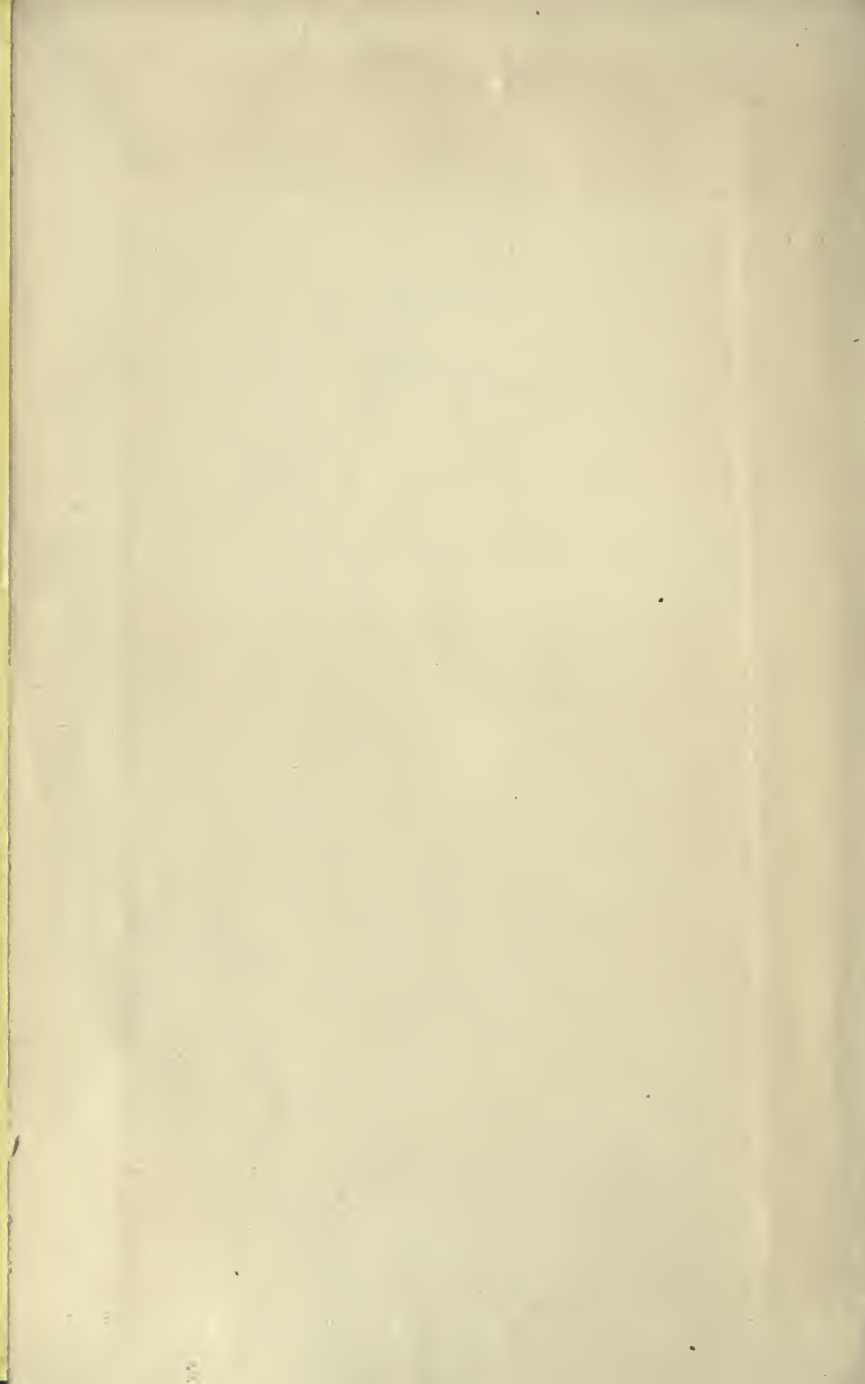


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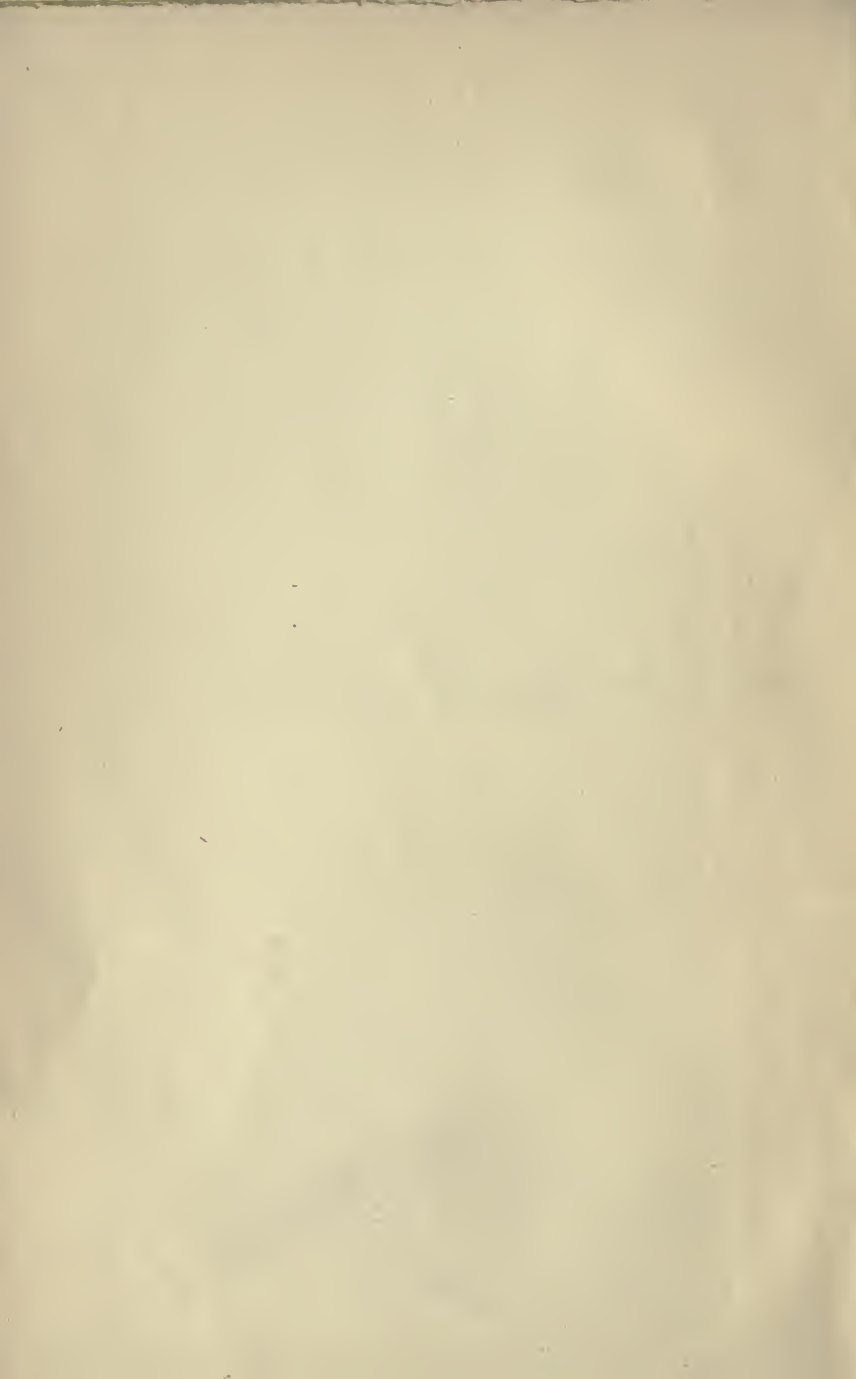
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BY
GEORGE H. LONG
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GENERAL

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“Some Popular Philosophy”

THE title of this little work may require some explanation. It is intended to be at once a modest and accurate indication of its scope.

Philosophy may be read in text-books, in encyclopaedias and, fragmentarily, in magazines, but all these are open to like objections to the “Man in the Street.” The terminology is too technical ; theories are too often treated as mere food for academic disputation, and discussion too rarely entered upon as aught but a mental gymnastic, an occasion for metaphysical logomachy.

And so, philosophy is to the many a closed book, and every man is to a large extent his own philosopher : theoretical philosophy, except among the cultured or the leisured, there is none. To a great extent, this is a pity : after all, there are some things in heaven and earth which philosophy has dreamt of, but dreamt

of in a somewhat pedantic and long-winded way. To take some of these things, to strip them of their technical garb, and submit them for what they are worth, is the Author's aim.

Neither construction nor destruction is intended : no old theory, however obsolete, however inadequate is here attacked on the author's own initiative : no new theory, however modest, however tentative, would I here submit : all that is here endeavoured is to remodel, to paraphrase, and to present to a new public. The work has been styled "some" popular philosophy, not "a" popular philosophy, of set purpose. Many points, usually considered to come under the head of philosophy, are necessarily void of interest to the "Man in the Street," and to call any work "A philosophy," implying that it touched on all parts of such an all-embracing subject, were surely presumptuous.

Not "a philosophy" then, but "some philosophy" shall the considerate reader find herein : certain heads of philosophy shall be paraphrased, and certain lines of thought indicated.

In the hope that it may prove a suggestive introduction to a "divine" study, and that it may stimulate to the reading of some of the greatest thinkers of the ages, the Author humbly leaves it in the gentle hands of the "Man in the Street."

THE DIGNITY OF MAN.

“ LORD, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him ! or the son of man that thou takest account of him ! ” exclaimed the Psalmist in eloquent pessimism, and the question has been repeated and answered by all thinking men innumerable times and in manners beyond count.

Summarily, we may make a two-fold classification of the answers : of the one kind, are those which class man with the animals, and put him on a level with the beasts of the field ; of the other are those that claim for him dominion over the animal kingdom and make him, if a little less than angel, yet a little more than beast. Upon our choice between these answers must depend our answer to another question propounded by puzzled man from the beginning of the ages : Is Life Worth Living ?

“ Man,” says Aristotle, is a “ featherless biped ; ”
“ man,” said jesting Burke, is “ a creature that cooks

his own victuals ” ; man, says the materialist, is of the stuff monkeys are made of, developed, maybe, out of all knowledge, taught by the experience of ages that it is convenient and useful to give way in some things to others, that by yielding to others that which you do not want yourself you shall get much which you do want ; a creature which by superior cunning and overwhelming brain-power has proved itself fittest to survive, but which depends entirely for the dignity of its position for the sovereignty it exercises over all other animals upon this cunning, this intellect, and which, failing this, would, perchance, be slave to a race of ants or whatever creature might possess pre-eminent intelligence.

In short man is magnified ape, abnormally developed monkey ; his heritage is the heritage of all animals ; his destiny of the earth, earthy ; clever enough to cook his own victuals, cunning enough and strong enough to do to death all the other beasts of the field ; yet connected by direct, unbroken descent with the mollusc, the ascidian, the original protoplasm, there is assuredly nothing in him but that its germ existed, even though as a grain of mustard seed, in the primordial beginnings of these.

Then, fellow animals, let us eat, drink and be merry ; let us say with the Preacher “ there

is nothing better for man than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour "; our only duty is to ourselves ; let us indeed profit by the experience so dearly bought by our ancestor, man, monkey or the missing link, and bear in mind that to live most profitably for ourselves we must live in some measure for others ; let us not be entirely selfish—that were foolish, and, ultimately, hurtful to ourselves ; but, above all, let us not be unselfish beyond expedience, for that were suicidal ; as animals, heirs of ages of animals, inheritors of the experience of countless centuries, let us subjugate to ourselves all the forces of nature, let us use the beasts of the field to fetch and carry for us, let us advance, progress as our superior cunning justifies us in advancing and progressing ; but may we never hear, after our blazoning forth " the trend of civilization," after our boasting of " the survival of the fittest," after our vaunting of " the march of intellect," deep down in our hearts the still small voice " All is vanity and vexation of spirit, every thing under the sun is vanity."

This, then, is one answer ; the answer of the materialist and of many an evolutionist ; man is just animal, excessively sagacious, super-abundantly endowed with all that makes for success, dominion and power ; in common par-

lance, just like other animals, only more so ; in more scientific phraseology differing from the beasts of the field in degree but not in kind ; at the top of the animal kingdom, but only so by virtue of qualities developed from identical qualities inherent, though often latent, in our ancestor the ape.

Man's dissatisfaction, says Carlyle, is born of his greatness, and there are few, even among our most rigid evolutionists or uncompromising materialists, who sincerely hold that man is merely the noblest, most intelligent, most fitted for dominion of animals ; granted the origin, many say, it is but a physical origin ; man is not all body, blood or brain ; somewhence, somewhen and somehow there came to man a something which carried him across a great gulf which hereafter was immutably fixed between man and animal.

How this difference came none may know ; as to its existence, its nature and its eternal meaning, philosophy has something to say, something which, if accepted, cannot but ennoble and stimulate all who believe it. To set this forth, rid of all technicalities, divested of the terms in which our cloistered specialists have so long discussed it and set it forth, not as food for academical disputation, but precisely for what it is worth, helpful or meaningless, is the writer's

object. "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him," says the Book of Genesis, and many thinkers, fastening upon this, and interpreting it to mean "in the physical image of God" have reversed the operation and pictured for themselves an anthropomorphic God, a magnified man ; again to use a common expression, God is, to these, a man with human attributes, only more so.

In what way exactly we conceive man to be created in the image of God we will shortly endeavour to explain by the help of a paraphrase of a little simple metaphysics.

First, however, we will see how a few great thinkers have expressed repugnance to the materialistic theory of man as animal.

We cannot begin better than by quoting Shakespeare, of whom it has been well said that while all other poets are "conceivably wise, he is inconceivably wise" and whose wisdom consists of the wisdom of life.

No passage of Shakespeare's can be styled hackneyed, and we make no apology for reproducing a household quotation ; its special significance from the philosophic point of view shall afterwards be indicated.

"What a piece of work is man ! How noble in reason ! how infinite in faculties ! in form and moving, how ^{very} express and admirable ! in action

how like an angel ! in apprehension, how like a God ! ” Says Tennyson—

“ Not only cunning casts in clay,”
Let science prove we are, and then
What matters science unto men,
At least to me ? I would not stay.”

“ The children of God,” says St. Paul “ heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ,” “ a labourer together with God,” while Emerson nobly claims that “ every man is a channel through which heaven floweth.”

Here we crave the reader’s pardon for a slight excursus into metaphysics, hoping to demonstrate how the philosopher of what has been grandly called “ The Science of Being ” has vaguely guessed at the great truth expressed by Shakespeare in terms which almost precisely anticipated those in use by the modern metaphysician. We are familiar with applied mathematics, and applied mechanics ; can we not also apply our metaphysics, and by its means hint to the “ Man in the Street,” the man who does the work of the world, and, without whom your cloistered metaphysician would be destitute of the veriest hair-brush, at the direction in which lies the real, eternal difference between man and ape ?

THE PROBLEM OF METAPHYSICS.

ONE could not, probably, more surely earn the withering contempt of the "Man in the Street" than by going up to him and politely putting to him the question, "Is what is?"

And if one were to inform the same gentleman that the major part of metaphysics has been directed to the proving or the disproving of the assertion that "what is, is," then he would most assuredly write down the metaphysician a fool, and, hinting at a certain proverb which connects Satan and idle hands, recommend to the philosopher the ploughing of the sands or some equally strenuous occupation. Nevertheless, though writing for the man in the street, the man who faces the world as it is to him, kindly or adverse, nor asks philosophy why this should be and why that should not be; though conscious of the disfavour in which the man in the street holds all that savours of pedantic verbiage or academic logomachy, the writer hopes by a



paraphrase of one or two metaphysical discussions to demonstrate that his whole present conduct, his future aspirations, depend upon his unexpressed conviction that "what is, is": more than this, it shall be his endeavour to show that in as far as he believes that what is, is, inasmuch as he refuses to hold that what is is not, in so far does he look upon himself as more than the animals, as a man with a duty, a conscience, and an immortal destiny.

It is a fact, deplorable maybe, but still incontrovertible, that some men find more help in religion than others; nay more, it is a fact, likewise deplorable maybe, but also likewise incontrovertible, that many men have no religion at all.

Now there are times when these men, perplexed with the infinite worries and responsibilities of life, quailing, perhaps, before some apparently unmerited piece of misfortune, or aghast at a friend's ingratitude, are tempted to give up all struggle and all endeavour; are tempted to point at the bay-tree prosperity of the wicked, and say unto themselves "'All men are liars': let us, therefore, live at random, for the world is a random world: chance rules everywhere; one man's life-blood may be poured out to no avail, while another man may by the luck of a lottery make for himself wealth, friends and reputation."

Doubtless, the religious faith of many prevents them from taking such a despairing view of things, but, equally doubtless, there are many who, looking round upon the undeserved misery of thousands, and seeing the corrupt, the adulterer, the swindler flourishing in high places cry out, in their bewilderment, that nothing matters ; the world is devoid of system ; by chance it came into being, and chance is the sole arbiter of man's destiny.

So believed the old world philosopher, driven by that wonder from which all philosophy has come, to cry aloud that " all things are in a state of flux " : nothing lasts ; all is of the day, ephemeral : to-day they are, to-morrow they are not ; the hero and the coward, the martyr and the turn-coat, the profligate father and the devoted parent—all have their day : in like manner they all die and their place knows them no more : life has no system, no order persists through all things ; the rain falls alike upon the just and upon the unjust, and the just and unjust alike return to the dust which, after all, they are. Sings Longfellow—

" Things are not what they seem."

But, says the philosopher, that is just what things are : the wicked *do* flourish like a green

bay tree : over and over again has one man, in the course of his own lifetime, seen his inmost convictions betray him, been foiled by all that he held most reliable—a woman's love, a friend's regard, and, baffled, has cried aloud in the bitterness of his heart, that on the earth and in the heavens above the earth there is nothing to which a man may pin his faith : all is chaos ; blind chance rules everywhere ; nowhere is there stability ; all things good and evil have their day and are no more.

To those who are of this mind, whom doubt and perplexity have driven thus to disbelief in any world-system or order, to those who cannot with one supreme continuous effort of will lay aside all argument, all hesitancy, and say " I believe," metaphysics has somewhat to say.

" What seems to be," says metaphysics, is " not in reality ; but that which in reality is, cannot but be."

What seems to be, indeed, in one sense is, but is only for a time, it is of this world temporal ; whereas that which is in reality is in quite another sense, in that it is for all eternity, " is now and always shall be."

In other and better words, " the things which are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal."

The things which are seen are those which

merely seem to be ; the things which are not seen are those which actually and fully are : the things which are seen, or the things which seem to be cannot be said, if we may so express it, to have the same measure of existence.

“God’s in his heaven, all’s right with the world,” says the Christian, sublimely faithful : but it is not given to all to attain to such faith ; and the problem of metaphysics is briefly this—to demonstrate that through all the apparent contradictions of this bewildering sojourn upon earth there runs a system, divine and beneficent : that underlying all the apparent injustice, inconsistency, and ironical inconsequence of men’s lots there is reason, infallible and inevitable, reason shared with God by man alone of all animals, and in virtue of which alone man has a duty to perform, and a destiny to anticipate.

A solution of this problem, a solution which has proved infinitely stimulating to many a student, it is the aim of the writer to set forth so that he who runs may read.

A SOLUTION—I

“MAN is the measure of all things,” said the ancient seer, and Shakespeare has given us an alternative expression, identical in meaning, “There is nothing either good or evil, but thinking makes it so.”

In other words, a thing is what it appears : in contrast to Longfellow’s diction, things *are* what they seem. This water appears hot to you, it therefore *is* hot : this wind appears cold to me, and therefore it is cold : a man makes his own circumstances ; you cannot say of one thing that it is this or it is not that ; it partly is and partly is not ; to some it is, to others it is not.

Nothing is permanent ; everything is by fits and starts ; chance rules ; everything is either beginning to be, or ceasing to be ; in short, everything is in a state of flux : you cannot grasp anything and say of it, for all time and for all circumstances, “ this is ” or “ this is not.”

To the healthy man this wind appears hot, to his unhealthy companion it appears chilly : who shall stand up between them and say, "Perhaps it does appear hot to one, and chilly to the other ; actually, it is temperate" ; temperate, indeed, it may appear to him, but he is, like the others, endowed with susceptibilities ; either he is hardy or he is effeminate, in a good state of body or a bad, and dependent upon these susceptibilities, these considerations, is his judgment.

"It is right to forgive one's enemies," says one man ; "to forgive one's enemies is criminal leniency," says another, "and such a policy, consistently pursued, would ruin society and put an end to progress." And who shall say, "Certainly you think this and your opponent that ; as a matter of fact it is folly to forgive."

One man judges according to the peculiar individual experience which is his ; another man according to his private, particular circumstances : from one man's point of view it is as undoubtedly as wrong as from the other's it is indubitably right.

And who shall judge ? Man is necessarily partial, inevitably a partisan : the circumstance of his life, the constitution of his body, his digestion, his state, married or single, his experiences, fortunate or unfortunate, perforce influence

him : each man sees through a glass darkly, and each man looks out upon the world through his own window-pane ; no two window-panes are the same, and according to the nature of this pane, so is the world to him.

From day to day, this pane varies in condition ; to-day it is obscured with the fog of doubt, to-morrow traced over with the frost of distrust, while, again, it is undimmed and transparent.

Yet the man cannot get to the outside of it ; always must he look through a glass ; he cannot say of this, " It is right," for does not his neighbour say " It is wrong ? " And who shall judge between them ?

What is one man's meat is another man's poison : in one country polygamy is *à la mode* and a man's social status is according to his number of wives ; in another bigamy is criminal.

Who shall say that monogamy is right, or that polygamy is wrong ?

The one nation says, in our climate, under our circumstances, polygamy is right ; the susceptibilities of the other nation are offended by anything but a consecrated monogamy : one generation hangs a sheep-stealer, the next hesitates about doing to death the murderer.

What was right to one nation is wrong to another : what is permissible to a man in one state of mind is a heinous offence in another.

Right and wrong do not exist as absolute standards: just as a beef-steak is most glorious to a man in health, most nauseating to an invalid, so that which was wrong is right, and all things fluctuate according to him who has to do with them.

One billiard ball, upon impact with another, has, hitherto, always been perceived to produce motion; yet who shall say that this shall always be the case? Man does not know that this is a law of nature: he is so influenced by himself, so much in the power of his susceptibilities, that he can only say, "This seems to be the invariable case," not "This is and must be"; though he sees the same cause have the same effect nine-hundred and ninety-nine times, there is no certainty that the thousandth time shall not prove to the contrary.

Men refused to, or were unable, for countless generations to believe in the existence of the Antipodes, or swans other than white swans; yet man's convictions went for naught: the existence of the Antipodes was proved, and black swans were actually seen.

That this is a doctrine of despair, a doctrine which leads to cessation of effort, and renders futile and gratuitous all struggle is sufficiently obvious; man is reduced to the position of a candidate in a competitive examination, who is

informed that the successful candidate will be selected by lot : there are no standards of right and wrong : merit is a chimaera : that which was wrong is right ; sometimes the wages of sin is death, but the contrary is every bit as likely to be the case.

Not only is man in the world, but he is also of it ; worldly, he knows nothing of the system upon which the world is conducted, if system indeed there be ; he cannot attain to what is, he can only apprehend what seems to him : and how can he, a creature made of clay, dragged down by worldly conditions, chained to mother earth who bore him and claims him wholly for her own—how can he know anything ? To him, things only seem : all is contradiction, all is chaos : there is no world-order, no necessity : what he sees depends upon the keenness of his vision ; what he tastes depends upon the delicacy of his palate ; what he thinks depends upon the condition of his brain-cells.

The majority of men call a certain colour scarlet, and claim that those who give it another name are colour-blind ; yet may not the latter turn round upon them and say, “ Nay, but it is you who are colour-blind.”

Who shall vouch for the law of gravitation ? Who will stake his existence upon the law of cause and effect ? Man is the measure of all

things : all he can say is that to him this seems right, that law seems to be a true law, and that therefore this is right to him, and that law a true law to him, which, after all, is only incontrovertible because tautological.

He cannot say this seems right to me because it is, absolutely and eternally, right ; because he is so limited, so circumscribed, that he can but pronounce upon what he sees through a glass.

Is not that which yesterday was to me, morose disappointed, and depressed, repulsively ugly, to the me of to-day, hopeful, buoyant and purposed to look only upon the bright side of things, a thing of infinite beauty and joyous promise ?

And so, poor man, fettered down to earth, is, as it has well been expressed, “an incarnate absurdity gazing at unredeemed contradictions” : an absurdity in that he is the puppet of some great world-force, going he knows not whither, coming he knows not whence, gazing through purblind eyes at a world that to him has no meaning, at facts which daily contradict themselves : for how does he know that man, who once held the sun to be nightly quenched in the Western Ocean, who held it impossible for men to walk fly-like with their feet opposite ours, who once devoted a life-time to the quest of the philosopher’s stone ; how does this man, at the mercy of his circumstances, and absolutely

conditioned by his environment, know that to-morrow he may not wake up to find the earth flat, the law of gravitation a chimaera, and almsgiving the unforgivable sin ?

Indeed, according to Heracleitus, he knows not : all is in a state of flux, transient and ephemeral ; nothing is that was, and nothing that is shall be.

No man can say this is righteous, that is seemly, or thus shall I get salvation : for right and wrong, good and evil, do not exist ; only that which seems hot to me do I pronounce hot, and only that which I deem right do I hold by.

All is shifting as a kaleidoscopic view : nothing lasts or persists through all changes, and a man shall shun delights for the sake of that he called honour, and find in the end that that which he considered honour now appears of all things most dishonourable : for, in the interval, the glass through which he looks has grown dim, and so, a truce to effort ! let us live disorderly in an orderless world !

A SOLUTION—II

IT is with relief that the writer turns from the consideration of this creed of pessimism, to a doctrine which, after all, almost all men tacitly believe, which the Bible affirms, and which metaphysics has attempted to explain.

There be some, though we would fain believe that in this their common sense has yielded to their love of singularity, their powers of reasoning to their weakness for pedantry, who hold that, at a moment when no one is looking at it, the Tower of London is not, does not exist. When one looks at it, one sees that which one calls the Tower of London, and men have agreed to call that which they see "The Tower of London," but inasmuch as each man looks through his own glass, who is to say that all men see the same thing there? Nay more, inasmuch as all men can but see darkly through a glass, who will

declare that what seems to them, really is ? That that which seems to the eye to exist, does actually exist when no eye is upon it ?

We are aware that to the man in the street, with his reverence for hard facts, this must appear veriest folly, and we ourselves confess it to be the *reductio ad absurdum* of a theory which makes man a creature gratuitously befooled, misled with a devilish cruelty.

“What a piece of work is man ! How noble in reason ! in apprehension, how like a God !” again we quote, without apology, and again we remark that Shakespeare here expresses the sum total of the modern metaphysician’s creed.

“Noble in reason” ; “like a God in apprehension” ; “reason and apprehension,” in these two words lies the clue to the whole matter, for it is that quality, that attribute, call it reason or apprehension, as you will, that makes man “a co-heir with Christ a fellow-worker with God” ; note the phrase particularly ; man, in virtue of reason, Divine, God-like, reason which he shares with God, is not subordinate to but, in one sense, co-ordinate with God ; it is in virtue of this that man is made in the image of God : this reason, this apprehension, is of God ; in reason God created this wondrous earth, and all the infinite host of heaven, and, as possessing, in part, this same reason, man is enabled in part

to understand rightly how it was created ; man, a reasonable creature, can read a little in Nature's infinite book, can in some measure apprehend the reasonable system on which Nature works, because the reason in him is akin to, of the same kind as, that exhibited in all the workings of Nature, and both, the reason of the world, and the reason of man, proceed from God, the Absolute Reason.

There are many fortunate people who can trust the inspired words of the New Testament ; are, by faith, enabled to accept the repeated assertions of man's divinity and his eternal destiny ; but, again we assert, it is a fact that many are incapable of this supreme act of faith, and, looking round upon man's degradation, his animality, seek a sign, and ask a reasonable conviction.

To these, philosophy has something to say.

“ Man,” says Aristotle, “ is a rational animal ” ; which, being interpreted, is “ Man, of all animals, can put two and two together.”

Man sees one billiard ball strike another and produce motion ; after seeing this several times he says the motion is the result of the impact of two bodies, the effect of a cause. How can he say this ? How is he justified in framing this law ? Because he has seen this to be the case ten thousand times ? No ; a dog may have

seen a like number of instances and yet never have framed the law.

The man has indeed seen ; but he has done something else : he has seen it mentally ; he has stored up these sense impressions, these things seen by the eye of the body—he has reflected upon them, thought upon them ; and, so reflecting, so thinking, he has used that reflection, that thought with which God has endowed him, alone of all animals : and this thought, this reason is Divine ; by virtue of it, man has dominion over the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air ; by virtue of it, the scientist reveals the secret workings of the universe, and man is able to see, not with the eye of the body, through a glass darkly, but with the eye of the mind, aright.

When I do not see the Tower of London, I say, nevertheless, that it does exist. And I am justified in saying so, because it is my reason which enables me to say so ; my reason which God gave me, who created the world ; the universe works according to laws made by God ; and God created man of such a kind, possessed of such a reason, as to be able to apprehend these laws.

Wherefore is man, if flesh, at least reason encarnalized ; as possessing a body, in the world ; as participating in Divine Reason, not of the world.

“ A burnt child fears the fire.” Why ? because he has felt, once, twice or thrice the pain resultant from touching fire ? No. For this reason a dog, possessing sagacity, might fear it ; but the child, possessing intellect, rationality, has not only felt the fire, but stored up this feeling, compared it with other feelings and, reasoning upon it, has tacitly framed a law, “ fire burns ” ; in so doing he has read somewhat in Nature’s book of secrecy ; he has done so only by virtue of that reason, own relation of that reasonable system on which the world is governed, and, with it, derived from God, Supreme Reason : he has exerted an inestimable privilege, a privilege not granted to any but man of all animals. Christ who was Reason, pure, untrammelled, for our sakes became for a period, Reason encarnalized ; for a time, fettered to earth even as man, clothed in the garb of decay, to all seeming an animal, actually and really possessing that divine something which separates Him eternally and immutably from animal.

Man, possessing that reason which distinguishes the finite from the infinite, the temporal from the eternal, the material from the spiritual, has become heir to the Kingdom of God.

At the same time, man, as distinct from animal, now has a duty ; “ right and wrong ” now have a meaning for him, a meaning of which

he can no longer plead ignorance. "Our Father which art in Heaven": what after all does this amount to but a confession that, after all our little systems have had their day, after we have exulted over our triumphs or mourned our failures—after all is said and done, one system there is in heaven, and the will of this system must be done? Above is the Author of this system, and his, ultimately, though yesterday, to-morrow or to-day, hearts are proud and brows rebellious, is the kingdom and the power and the glory.

That, in short, in whose likeness we are created; that which is the author of the wonderful laws of nature which govern the universe, and the source of that quality in us by participation in which we are able to apprehend these laws, and subvert them to our own use.

"Thou art in Heaven;" Thou dost rule the world; "Thine is the Kingdom;" Thine, and of Thee, the order, the method of this world.

And so long as "Thou art in Heaven," so long as man is created in thine image, is endowed with reason, so long does man incur a terrible responsibility in that he knows that this is right and that that is wrong.

A COROLLARY

IF the paraphrase preceding has not been wholly wanting in success, we may lay claim to having established something of the following—the distinction of man from animal, or, as it has well been expressed, the protrusion of man from the animal kingdom ; the exposition of this distinction as consisting in the possession of reason, intelligence or thought, as distinct from the five senses, and from mere animal sagacity or cunning—distinct in kind, and not merely removed in degree.

That this reason, intelligence, essentially human, and by which alone man claims his title of rational animal, is thus distinct from the sagacity of the animal kingdom, the metaphysician attempts to demonstrate, by showing that it is Divine, that it is one with the reason underlying the laws of Nature, and that, together with this reasonable system, it emanates from the Supreme Reason, “by whom all things are.”

Man, limited to his five senses, would see

nothing but a confused blur, would hear nothing but unmeaning thuds ; he would see but “ through a glass, darkly ” ; all would be contradictory, a chaos ; seeing nothing and knowing nothing of an orderly world, he would be justified in living disorderly—at random.

Man, gifted with intelligence, can understand and interpret what he sees, hears, feels, touches, and tastes ; no longer is the world a chaos, contradictory, an orderless, disorganized (or, better, unorganized) concourse of atoms, but the outcome of a Divine system, the expression of a method : he sees that the wages of disobedience to the laws of health is death, that the outcome of the compact of two bodies is motion ; more than that, he sees that the wages of this disobedience must be, can be nothing but, death, for the universe is governed by laws immutable and irrefragible : he is emphatically not justified in setting them at naught.

As in the physical world, so in the moral ; here also man’s reason compels him to recognize, forbids him to ignore, the Divine Reason ; here also are laws, here also is a system ; here also the wages of sin is death, and just as the sin is spiritual, so also is the death.

Thus “ right ” and “ wrong ” have their meaning. “ It behoves us to live according to nature,” said Cicero, and he who sets at naught

the laws of health shall assuredly die ; he who refuses to recognize the law of gravitation shall most undoubtedly fall ; and he who will not grant that two and two make four shall most incontrovertibly come to ruin.

These are great laws of Nature, and he who opposes them must bear the consequences : man cannot plead ignorance.

Also, it behoves man to live according to his spiritual nature, and his spiritual nature is such that here also he cannot plead ignorance of right and wrong, for there is that in each man which speaks to him, unmistakably, of this system, this order.

In short, for man alone, " duty " and " ought " have a meaning, and our intention here is neither to dictate, to construct, to destroy, nor to interpret, but to paraphrase some conceptions of this " duty," this " ought," as held by certain thinkers.

Plato said that it was impossible for a man to know what was good, and to refuse to do it : sin arose through ignorance, a false estimation of life, and a miscalculation of the value of things : the real philosopher, the absolutely wise man was the really good man, inasmuch as he " could see things together, best of all men," or could take a broad, dispassionate view of all things, could appreciate the true worth of this, the real

worthlessness of that, and could determine aright what was worth striving after as an ultimate end of life, what things were useful as a means to that end, and what things were actually injurious as likely to tempt man from the straight path, and lead him to pursue that which was valueless.

According to their conception as to what is the end of life, that to which all else must be subservient, and, if not actually injurious, at least useful only as means to an end, schools of thinkers are divided.

To take one of our earliest philosophers, founder or chief exponent of a school of thought to which thousands who have never so much as heard mention of it are tacit adherents.

The theory is called the hedonistic theory, and its adherents, hedonists; the nature of the theory is that pleasure of one kind or another is life's ultimate end, that self-gratification is the final end of being.

The theory holds, not only that man does, as a matter of fact, definitely set pleasure before him as an end, but that, by thus proposing to himself this end, man shall be in the right way to becoming that which he ought to become; that man is so constituted, that attainment of pleasure, self-gratification and his perfection are one and the same thing: in short, that self-gratification and self-satisfaction are identical.

“Englishmen take their pleasures sadly,” and what Froissart said of us might, with a slightly different interpretation, be said of all men, for a more miserable, discontented man than the average, so-called “man of pleasure,” it would be difficult to find: alternately inordinately elated and suicidally depressed, he is generally at war with himself, an example of infinite weakness, pitied by his friends, and despised by his acquaintances.

Of the tens of thousands who wreck their lives by surrender to their desires, it is not our intention to speak; instead, we turn to those who aim at pleasure, not yielding in weakness to the overpowering seductions of a “life of pleasure,” but firmly believing that thus and thus only shall they attain their being’s end and aim.

Whether, to paraphrase an ancient saying, a man’s pleasure be in ping-pong or poetry, that pleasure is man’s inalienable right, and it is his duty, even, to pursue it; for only by attaining that in which his pleasure lies shall man be fully himself—that which he was created to be; pleasure is the one thing in heaven and earth worth having—the one thing necessary is to take a proper view of pleasure and aim at it in the way best fitted to pursue it.

Originally, say the exponents of this theory, men went the wrong way about pursuing pleasure;

they neglected, so to speak, to propitiate their fellow-seekers after pleasure, to make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, failing to see how, by letting others have what we ourselves do not want, by allowing them to rest in undisturbed possession of what is useless to us, we can secure that upon which we have set our own hearts.

In the beginning, they tell us, every man was an Ishmael, his hand against every man's, and every man's against his, grasping and grubbing that upon which he could lay hands, repelling and repelled by his neighbours.

Later, however, dawned the area of "sweet reasonableness," and the quest of pleasure was reduced to a science; man began to see that a perpetual state of war, such as this Ishmael-like state of existence necessitated, was far from conducive to his own interests, that the great doctrine of division of labour would confer immense benefits upon mankind, and that, in order to be thoroughly and consistently selfish, we had, to a certain extent, to be unselfish; in short, the gratification of one's self was the end to which some consideration of others was the necessary means.

So man entered into a compact with his fellow men, and framed certain rules and laws for the better preservation of peace and order, so neces-

sary to the undisturbed pursuit of that pleasure to which the life of man was, and ought to be, wholly devoted : disturbance of this peace, offences against this order, were to be visited by punishments laid down in a penal code ; man's duty was to submit to this code ; wrong doing was violation of the law of the land, and right and wrong had a purely civil meaning, as between citizen and citizen ; “ to respect one's neighbour as one's self,” this was the whole of the Law and the Prophets, for is not your neighbour, like you, a seeker after pleasure, and are not you and he “ bound up in the same bundle of life ? ”

A state of peace and orderliness must be obtained ; else, by undue aggression and intrusion upon one's neighbour, man will defeat his own object by bringing about a state of anarchy and lawlessness in which pleasure, man's divine and pre-ordained right, is an impossibility.

A man cannot be really happy and at peace with himself if he knows that his old friend's children are begging their bread ; a man after curtly refusing alms to a pitiful mendicant rarely feels quite comfortable, so orphan asylums and poor-houses are built : “ charity covers a multitude of sins,” and a little charity discriminat- ingly bestowed makes one feel at peace with one's self, and gives one much greater zest, by way of contrast, for one's own pleasure.

And so man, an ape perhaps, though hairless and upright, is, as he has been called, an altruistic ape ; pleasure-seeking by nature, he has learnt from the experience of ages to take a sufficiently broad view of pleasure, and has realized that, after all, Ishmael had a very poor time of it : much better to respect one's neighbour as one's self, much better to dwell together in unity and devote one's time, not to fruitless, self-defeating strife, but to concentrated, well-directed effort after pleasure.

Now, before proceeding to the consideration of the initial postulate of this theory, that man is, necessarily and by his very nature, a creature of pleasure, it will be well to attend to an objection certain thinkers have put in to another part of the theory. Man, they say, in the first place, never was an Ishmael, his hand against every man's, and every man's hand against his ; in the second place, if he had been, he could never have met his fellows and entered into a compact for the better preservation of law and order.

"Man," says Aristotle, "is a political animal" : he is not an isolated atom ; in the nature of things, and according to his constitution, he is a "social being" : without society, he is imperfect, not himself—not that which he was created to be, and it is doubtful whether it is historically correct to represent any period of the world's

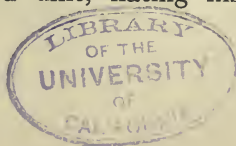
history as one in which man was this self-centred, self-regarding creature set forth for us by the exponents of the hedonistic theory. Aristotle tells us that at first he dwelt “ in villages,” and it is not too much to say that man is of a gregarious nature, such that, even in the first beginnings of things, he lived in some kind of a community, however crude, however it lacked conscious recognition.

Moreover, in some measure to follow a Hibernian mode of reasoning, granted that primeval mankind was thus composed of mutually repugnant units, could such individuals have come together and formed any compact of a binding nature ?

Could man, who thus considered his fellow only in the light of a hindrance, merely as a rival, who knew not the nature of a promise, nor understood the meaning of good faith, thus frame laws and establish sanctions for these laws, or, in other words, institute a code of penalties ?

Surely, for such a state of things to come to pass, we must pre-suppose that man was, at least in some measure, a social animal, that he knew the nature of a promise, and appreciated the benefits of that unity he intended to aim at.

To put the matter more briefly, were man by nature an isolated unit, hating his kind, and



blindly self-seeking, unused to the society of his fellows, it could never come to pass that he should seek peace ; should he seek it, his nature would be such that "the old Adam" could not be constrained, and he could never ensue it.

Underlying the whole theory, however, is the gigantic pre-supposition that man is by nature a pleasure-seeking animal, that self-gratification, whether it be found in the gross debaucheries of the sensualist, or the intellectual indulgences of the man of culture and refinement, is, and is ordained to be, the be-all and the end-all of life.

THE PROTEST--I

THIS hedonistic theory found its chief exponent in Hobbes, and may be described as the first theory consciously propounded by English philosophy; perhaps it were not too much to say that the reaction, the revulsion of feeling which followed it, were so violent and so lasting, that almost the whole of subsequent philosophy has been one long, sustained endeavour to refute it.

The considerations which have formed the basis upon which certain thinkers have entered their protest, may be briefly paraphrased.

To revert a little: the reasoning by which it is held that man is a pleasure-seeking animal, is ingenious, and has to many proved unanswerable. It is, with rough accuracy, as follows—

Man alone of all animals is purposeful; he alone sets before him in his every action, an end: inasmuch as he is "a rational animal," he alone can adjust ends to means, and say, consciously to himself, "this I do as a means to that end."

Now man proposes ends for himself, though a Higher Power disposes alike of him, his means and his ends ; he alone decides that this shall be his end, that his goal, and he, necessarily, chooses that as his end which seems to him most desirable, in other words, that which pleases him : that which pleases him is, it is only tautological to say, his pleasure. Pleasure therefore, gratification of self, whether one find one's gratification in the wine-cup, in the alleviation of suffering, or in intellectual exercitation, is, in the nature of things, that at which alone a man can aim.

As an argument, this reasoning is at once ingenious and fascinating ; many have, possibly in self-defence, professed to find it convincing ; ingenious and fascinating, however, though it may appear, it offends against a logical canon, and is a piece of false reasoning.

Yet far be it from us to say that it has remained for the logician to expose the fallacy, for ever since "ought," "right," and "wrong" had a meaning, ever since self-sacrifice was invented, and from such time as man first loved his neighbour, for so long has the loving father, the doting mother, the forgiving brother proved a living refutation of the theory, and, by force of example, given the lie to the whole school of hedonistic philosophers.

Perhaps it is presumptuous to show where certain thinkers deem the error to lie, to demonstrate logical disproof of a theory to men whose whole conduct proves it false ; our only excuse is that there are many who profess belief in the argument, and many more who, disliking it, cannot readily put their fingers upon the weak spot.

Though few men actually profess the hedonistic theory, and though, in such a case, each man is his own philosopher, yet it may not be without interest to indicate the line thinking men have adopted in their opposition to it.

And so we would endeavour to point out how it has been held, in the first place, that man is not naturally a pleasure-seeking animal ; in the second place, that he who deliberately aims at pleasure, inevitably, and precisely because he does thus deliberately aim at it, misses his mark ; finally, that were man thus deliberately to aim at and attain pleasure, this, so far from proving his being's end and aim, his natural goal, would leave him dissatisfied and wretched.

Be Careful

THE PROTEST—II

“MAN proposes”; to a large extent he is master of his destiny, inasmuch as he lays before himself those ends and aims which to him seem desirable. What seems desirable to him pleases him, that is, commends itself to him as an object worthy of being aimed at.

So far, the hedonistic argument must be accepted; but at this point the logician breaks with the philosopher of pleasure, and points to a well-known logical fallacy—that of using one term with two different meanings.

To say that man, in the nature of things, and just because he is what he is, aims at what pleases him, and therefore seeks pleasure, is an argument of the same kind as were one to say: “a pugilist must above all things have nerve; his training must therefore include copious tea-drinking, for tea-drinking is conducive to nerves.”

Obviously, here, “nerve” and “nerves” have

directly opposite meanings ; which is precisely the case with “ what pleases me ” and “ pleasure.”

That I choose what pleases me, I cannot deny ; that what pleases me is my pleasure is equally incontrovertible ; that “ my pleasure ” is pleasure, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, few would admit.

As it has been excellently put, “ man aims necessarily at pleasures, not at pleasure ” : those things which seem good to a man at different times of his life, those things which he decides are worthy of endeavour alike at the church door or on the music-hall promenade, after dining well at his club, or after visiting the sick daughter of an employé, all alike are at the time his pleasures, those things which at the time, under his peculiar circumstances, in the environment of the moment, please him ; but to say that pleasure was always synonymous with these pleasures were a libel upon human nature.

The vocabulary of that interesting philosophic conception, “ the plain man,” the very existence of such words “ ought,” “ right ” and “ wrong ” point to the refutation of such a theory.

He who says with the hedonist that the man who lays down his life for his king and country is exactly on a par with the dishonest contractor who makes his fortune at the Government's

expense, in that each alike pursue that which, to the individual, under the peculiar circumstances, is his pleasure, advocates an impossible and absurd theory which runs directly counter to the sentiment of his people, as unmistakably expressed in the language of his nation.

For how, did all men of necessity seek pleasure, come such words as "self-sacrifice," "forgiveness," and "heroism" to have such an incomparably fairer sound in men's ears than "a night out," "a glorious time," "a good bit of business" ?

If man must aim at pleasure, then the words "ought," "right," and "duty" would have the same place in the dictionary as hopeful parents attribute, for the edification of their offspring, to the term "can't."

To those seekers after pleasure, then, who would fain salve their consciences with the reflection that "after all I am what God made me ; I am not responsible for what pleases my fancy, what appeals to my peculiar sensibilities, what commends itself to my individual constitution," the logician would point out a grave error of reasoning, and the moral philosopher dilate upon the world of difference between the pleasure of an animal gifted with five senses, and blessed, or cursed, with the natural instinct to gratify those senses, and that which pleases,

or seems good to a man, endowed with a conscience, blessed, or cursed, with a duty, and possessed of a reason, which cannot err because it is of God.

Though it is thus claimed to be proved that man does not naturally and necessarily take his pleasure in "pleasure," commonly so called, it would of course be vain to deny that with a large proportion of men, "pleasure" and "that which pleases me" are synonymous terms.

It is an undoubted fact, a fact of natural history, if you will, that many men, either through weakness, or by reason of their peculiar susceptibilities, are unable to resist the allurements of a life of pleasure, while some few men through honest belief in the piece of reasoning, the fallacy of which we have endeavoured to expose, have no wish to resist these allurements, and assert instead that pleasure is their inherited and inalienable right.

Of such a kind was the ancient epicurean, and possessed of the same conviction is the modern "man of pleasure," honestly convinced that he is perfectly justified in having as good a time as possible, and consistently determined from day to day to devote himself to one unswerving pursuit of pleasure.

To these the philosopher would fain demonstrate the futility of their tedious quest, and

speak of that which they style "the paradox of hedonism."

This last rests upon no metaphysical basis, but depends entirely upon the experience of mankind, and is but the inference drawn by thinking men from their observations of this experience ; it may be, consequently, denied by any man ; and, as the experience of any one man is every bit as much a fact as that of any other, this denial from personal experience cannot be gainsaid ; nevertheless, the bare enunciation of the theory may not be without its use as calculated to give the staunch pleasure-seeker pause, and make him honestly ask himself whether it is, or is not, at variance with his own experience.

Briefly, it is this ; the surest way to miss pleasure is to aim at it ; elusive, coy, and fanciful, she falls not to the lot of him who makes her wooing his daily task, and the study of her whims the work of his life, but comes to him who throughout the heat and burden of the day can spare no minute to look her way, but, intent on the business of life, "scorns delight and lives laborious days."

An ex-member of the Canadian Mounted Police once observed that while in the force he was continually cursing his lot, bemoaning the hardships which he had to endure, and longing for the flesh-pots of Europe ; and yet, once he had

left the force, he realized that the time he spent therein was the happiest of his life.

How often, too, do we bring back to our memories some period of our lives which, at the time, appeared unspeakably wretched, unsurpassably bewildering in all its complex miseries, and, musing over them, say to ourselves that, after all, this time had its compensations, and that in those dark days there was an exhilaration in the daily hand-to-hand conflict with circumstances, a delight in buffeting the waves of adversity, which are wholly absent in our present even, straightforward manner of life.

Again, the following experience is, we venture to suggest, not infrequent with us : having on some date found great delight in one occupation, in a particular scene, in certain company, we decide, at a later date, to renew the delight and experience once more the pleasure.

With this end in view, we endeavour, as far as we are able, to reconstruct the circumstances ; once more we re-visit the haunts of our childhood, only to find them ironically poor and sorry as compared with the pictures of them our minds so fondly cherished ; again, we gather round our table the guests whose company the other evening proved so fascinating, whose conversation appeared so engrossing, and whose wit we thought so pungent and withal so good-humoured,

—only, alas ! too often to imagine that something essential is with us no longer, or to marvel at ourselves for ever finding delight in such commonplace people, such ordinary conversation and such feeble wit.

Once more, how many children receive with scornful incredulity the statements of their parents that their school days are the happiest time of their lives, or bitterly respond that, if this be the case, they care not to live the rest ; and how many grown men recognize that the irresponsibility, the heartfulness, the healthy competition of their boyhood, were indeed preferable to the whole of their after life.

That no work is so difficult as that of enjoying one's self is a truism, and we are all familiar with those characters in novels who, having in their youth lived days of strenuous endeavour, and devoted a self-denying life to the pursuit of wealth, say on some ill-fated day, " It is enough ! I will retire now and enjoy that for which I have worked so hard," only once more, to find disillusionment and to be confronted with disappointment.

The moral of all which is as Shakespeare expresses it—

" All things that are,
Are with more spirit chased than enjoyed."

and which the philosopher claims as proof of the “paradox of hedonism.”

As George Eliot, most philosophic of all novelists, observes through the medium of her immortal creation, “I’d sooner ha’ brewin’ day and washin’ day together than one o’ these pleasin’ days.”

What the upholder of the paradox of hedonism holds, and what he would urge upon every man most earnestly to consider, is not that pleasure is a chimaera, a sham, or a fraud, but that it does not come to those who seek it.

It is a Divine gift, granted only on certain conditions; it is incidental to effort, an appendage to duty done—call it what you will; what the theory amounts to, expressed in plain language, is that it is an adjunct to other things, without which it is as unattainable as is rest without labour.

Let a man, on holiday bent, set out to regain health, to study different scenes and alien manners, to shoot, to fish, to seek adventure, and to all these, pleasures may be added; to a whole-hearted endeavour to triumph in some game of skill or strength, a man discovers that pleasure has secretly accrued; but the realm of happiness “is a kingdom that cometh without observation,” and as surely as a man directs his energies to the pursuit of pleasure, as surely as he makes it his deliberate aim, so surely shall it elude him.

Kant saw only one reason which necessitated the existence of a God, and that was to reward the virtuous.

And, truly, one reason for our belief in God is that pleasure is such an inevitable adjunct to honest merit.

It is as though a man, charged with some lofty mission, proud of some great trust, exalted with some lofty aspiration were to ride, every nerve bent on reaching his destination, along some storm-swept plain; to this man the buffeting of the wind, the stinging of the rain, the feel of the horse under him would all bring an elevation and stimulate in him a joy of life for which he would seek in vain were he, some other day, to endeavour to reconstruct the circumstances with the avowed object of reproducing the pleasure; indeed, he could never reconstruct these circumstances exactly, never recall that particular frame of mind, that peculiar fitness of body; for a moment of time, unique and evanescent, is now, and then is gone for ever.

If, then, we have indicated how it has been held that hedonism falls to the ground on these two counts, we may now proceed to deal with the third; that pleasure acquired, of any kind and to any extent, does not and cannot satisfy, but that a "man of pleasure is a man of pains."

As it was open to any man to deny, on the grounds of his own personal experience, the truth of the "paradox of hedonism," so may any one man on the same grounds refuse assent to our last proposition, which, put succinctly, is that pleasure, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, does not satisfy.

The broad foundation for such a contention is that man's nature, the constitution of a human being, is such that it cannot possibly be satisfied, as it is meant to be satisfied, by any sequent feelings, any mere gratification of sense.

As a living being, living in the world, possessing body, blood and brains, passions and desires, as subject to the laws of cause and effect which govern him in common with all other physical bodies, as composed of mind and matter; man naturally aims at the gratification of these desires, be they intellectual or be they physical, of the mind or of the body.

But man is, it is claimed by many, not merely a living being, he is also a human being, and, by reason of this, there is that in him which makes it an absurdity to attempt to satisfy him with any, or all, gratification of his senses.

"Take any starving shoe-black," says Carlyle, "and clothe and feed him to his heart's content, gratify his every sense, and you will not satisfy him, for there is that in every man which can-

not be satisfied with the satisfaction of the senses."

Man's nature, hold the opponents of the hedonistic school, is tripartite, composed of body, mind and spirit; by virtue of the two former he is in the world, by virtue of the latter he is not of it; to attempt to satisfy the whole by administering to the part is every bit as absurd, as necessarily doomed to failure, as is the contradictorily futile attempt of the Christian Scientist to heal bodily disease by spiritual remedies. This belief, we think it not too much to say, is held explicitly or implicitly by the great majority of men who, rendered conscious of their greatness, of their destiny as men, by that discontent, so often termed divine, which refuses to be allayed by the good things of this world, and realizing the inevitable littleness, incompetence to satisfy of all that appeals to the senses, perceive that, inasmuch as they are men, not just animal, their happiness is not dependent upon eating the bread of carefulness, and laying up for themselves treasure, neither is it necessary for them to fare sumptuously every day,

On the contrary, these things have nothing to do with the question, they are irrelevant—beside the point.

Thus, indeed, can pleasure, commonly so called, consisting of the gratification of the

clamouring passions of the animal, be satisfied : themselves, essentially, and by their very nature, of the spirit, though destined awhile to sojourn on the earth, they determine to—

“ Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross ;
Within be fed, without be rich no more.”

“ How absurd,” says Plato, in one of those difficulties he was so fond of propounding, “ to talk about being master of one’s self ; for, if you are master of your self, must not your self be slave to you, under subjection to you ?

“ Nay,” he continues, “ for the self which is master is the higher self, the self in subjection to it, the lower.”

And it is upon the conception of what man’s self, what his essence, is, that all schools of philosophy build their creeds.

The hedonistic conception we have seen ; the Christian Scientist view, holding that mind alone exists and that matter is but a fiction of the imagination, in reality non-existent, shall shortly be discussed.

There is, also, the conception of the materialist, to some extent already touched upon, holding that man is but mind and body, which, with its corollaries, shall be shortly considered.

Before, however, we proceed to these theories, we would set forth how, assuming that man

is not entirely of this world, two different sets of thinkers have conceived his moral nature ; in what manner, and by what means, they have held him to have a duty, and to attribute a meaning to right and wrong other than the hedonistic one of that which is pleasurable and that which is painful.

THE OTHER EXTREME.

HITHERTO we have attempted to paraphrase the broad grounds upon which certain thinkers have based their objection to hedonism, to the theory that man can be satisfied by an aggregate of pleasures, that there is in man nothing wider than and higher than anything which can find permanent satisfaction in the gratification of his senses, and that this gratification is the end and aim of man's existence, to which all else should be subordinated as means to end, if not entirely discarded.

We now proceed to the consideration of the other extreme—the theory which has found its chief exponent in one of the greatest thinkers of the age, Kant, and has been lived up to by the old-world Stoic, the Stuart Puritan, and, not to mention other modern sects, the present day Plymouth Brother, the American "Shakers," and, with less consistency, the Methodist. Cursorily to paraphrase the theory,

its chief points are as follows : man has a duty ; this duty his reason leads him to reverence ; in so far as he is, to some extent, divine, made in the image of God, he can appreciate this duty, value it at its true worth, perceive that it ought to be performed, and reverence it as divine and supreme; that which this reverence for duty, for divine law, leads him to do is "moral" or "right" and that alone ; that which he is led to do from any other motive is "immoral" and "wrong," for, whereas duty and divine law are of the spirit, desire, feeling and passion are of the flesh.

Once more, and at the risk of tediousness, to repeat : man is part divine, part human ; by virtue of that part in him which is divine he is enabled to say "this I ought to do," and whatsoever is honest and of good repute is done only because it ought to be done, dictated only by this sense of duty or this respect for the Divine law ; whatsoever a man shall do for any other cause, whatsoever is dictated by natural desire, interest or wish, is, necessarily, since its source and its motive are of this world, wrong and immoral.

To paraphrase somewhat differently : as rational man is wholly good ; as an animal he is wholly bad ; as rational, he perceives this duty and says "this I must do" ; as an animal, he says "this I wish to come to pass" "this I would fain do" ;

the former is of the spirit, good ; the latter of the flesh, evil.

The course of conduct laid down by the former is moral : whatever is enjoined by desire, impulse or sentiment is immoral.

Man must act wholly from a sense of duty ; otherwise, influenced by the interests of this world, he is acting wrongly.

The flesh is directly opposed to the spirit, and a man cannot serve two masters ; affection, desire, and impulse must be subdued ; they have no place in the duty of man ; in no way must they be considered when deciding upon a course of action ; that alone which we must consult, and that alone whence just works can proceed, is law divine, the duty inexorable.

Thus Kant expounded, and, thus convinced, had the pagan Stoic spurned the pleasures of life, the Christian anchorite, celibate, fasted in his cell ; thus actuated, does the Puritan hold all that appeals to the senses to be a devil-sent temptation, and the North American " Shaker " maintaining that man, as a creature of this world, and therefore evil and undeserving of perpetuation, advocate a universal celibacy.

It has been said that some form of asceticism is a necessary first stage in any code of morality, and it shall be our endeavour to set forth how the philosopher has perceived much that is good

in this theory, and how also he has been led to reject it as impossible and untrue to the facts of life.

The course of events which leads to asceticism, Kantism and Puritanism has been described somewhat as follows—

A man begins by seeking pleasure, by aiming at the gratification of his desires, thinking thus to satisfy himself and attain his being's end and aim.

For the sake of example, let us assume he is successful, that his every sense is continually gratified, and, owing just to his nature as man, inasmuch as he is a human being, that man will most assuredly wake one morning to realize that he is dissatisfied, that there is something in him which refuses to find its realization in the most sumptuous dishes, in the divinest melodies, the most cultured society.

This way lies remorse: "I have sinned," cries the penitent; "henceforward I will renounce the flesh and all the lusts thereof; inclination, affection, shall have no place in me; duty shall be my law-giver, and only that which my reason tells me I must do, will I perform, for my reason is from above, of God, divine, while my affections, my inclinations, are of the flesh, and, consequently evil."

Again to formulate the chief tenet of this school

of thought ; only that which my reason tells me is my duty, and which I thus reverence as good, and, consequently, desire to perform, is moral ; anything springing from inclination, having its source in affection or desire, is immoral.

In one great point, all critics have sided with Kant ; on other counts, many just objections have been urged against him.

That man has a duty, that for him there is an "ought," a "right" and a "wrong" simply because, and insofar as, he is a rational animal, is universally admitted ; the chief arguments which a more tolerant philosophy brings to bear against the rigidity of Kant, the austerity of the Puritan and the narrowness of the Stoic are as follows—

One of the most quoted of all Aristotle's sayings is that "reason of itself never leads to action," and it is one which lead to important results.

Plato, on the contrary, held that it was impossible really to know what was right and to do what was wrong ; and many more recent thinkers have held that no man deliberately does what he knows to be wrong, but always acts according to his, perhaps mistaken and perverted, conception of what is right.

The latter view, that of Plato, shall be considered later ; at present, we will confine ourselves to the discussion of the saying of Aristotle that

reason or perception is not enough, of itself, to compel anyone to act according to it.

It was Butler who remarked upon the propensity shown by weak man to—

“Compound for sins they are inclined to
By damning those they have no mind to.”

And one may justly draw the inference that mankind does not fail, save, perhaps, in cases of exceptional circumstances, to distinguish the right from the wrong; indeed, if all depended upon one's capacity to perceive that one course of conduct was right and another wrong, the world would be a much more habitable place than it is.

Unfortunately, our weaknesses, our worldly affections, our interests, prevent us from always carrying out that which in our hearts we know full well to be our duty; and so it comes to pass that a heartless spendthrift, perceiving to the full the soulless degradation of a miser's manner of life, and having no sympathy with, and being unable to appreciate the peculiar distress which possess him, is very ready to condemn him.

It is a matter of common observation that the indignation of man is always stirred by the conduct of the stage villain, and his sympathy always roused by the sufferings of the innocent heroine, and the lower the class of the audience the more vigorously is “sentiment” applauded,

the greater the acclamation accorded to the virtuous platitude.

No matter in what particular iniquity the reader be momentarily engaged, no matter what vile thoughts he has just entertained, his anger is always aroused by the "bold bad man" of the novel, while he invariably experiences a desire to "get at" him.

And what is this but a clear perception of the right, a reverence for the good and a hatred of the evil?

Theoretically, in the case of another, a man reverences the law of duty; theoretically, in the case of himself, a man's reason tells him perfectly clearly that this is wrong and that that is right, but, in the latter case, inclination, desire, affection, step in and obscure the clearness of his vision.

"Reason of itself cannot move to action." Let a man see never so clearly that this is a duty, let him feel, to any extent, reverence and admiration for such a course of conduct, yet will neither this perception nor this reverence induce that man to put one foot before another to carry it into execution.

"Duty for duty's sake" is a chimaera; moral rectitude of vision is not sufficient to lead a man aright; something else is needed, and that something is desire, impulse or feeling.

*Present Bk
Syllabus
Fall*

THE HEAD OR THE HEART.

BEFORE proceeding to paraphrase the objections certain thinkers have urged against Kant, it may be expedient briefly to consider the salient points of certain other schools of philosophy.

Perhaps the best point of view from which to consider these theories, is according to their respective conception of duty, and they may, conveniently to our present purpose, be classified by the answers they respectively make to the questions, What is our duty? How does man know his duty? The answers to the latter question are roughly of two kinds: according to one, reason, thought or reflection tell us what our duty is; in other words, morality is a matter of the head: according to the other, our feelings, our emotions prompt us to what is right, and warn us from what is wrong: in other words, morality is a matter of the heart.

Briefly to explain: science has shown us the

law of gravitation ; our reason has taught us that two and two make four, and man has learnt that matter is indestructible.

Now, these are laws of nature, or laws of mathematical necessity ; the thought and reason of man has divined them, and holds them to be true in all circumstances, and for all time ; we firmly believe the world to be of such a kind that these great laws cannot but be true ; to deny them were absurd, and to act contrary to them disastrous.

As in science, so in morality, says a certain class of thinker ; the world is of such a kind, they argue, that the law of gravitation must hold good ; the universe is so constituted that all things cannot but obey it ; they have no alternative, and as in the realm of nature this law is valid, necessary and inexorable, so also in the sphere of morality are these laws equally valid, equally necessary and equally inexorable.

There is an eternal fitness of things ; the universe is constituted according to an everlasting order or system.

One expression, one manifestation, of this system is that two and two make four, or that matter is indestructible ; another manifestation of it, another expression of it, is (for example) that it is wrong to tell a lie.

To apprehend and appreciate each of these,

has been given to man's reason, to his intellect ; to neglect the former laws, which our brains have revealed to us, were absurd and would involve ruin in any enterprise upon which we were embarked ; in like manner, to neglect the latter, or any moral law which our brain, our intellect, reveals to us were every bit as absurd, and would, every whit as assuredly, bring down ruin upon our head.

The former ruin, is of course, of this world, temporal ; the latter spiritual and everlasting.

This view, that virtue is a thing of the head, has been, and is, widely held, and has taken many different forms.

"Will not," asks Plato, "the man who is most clever at stealing, be also the most suitable man to make a magistrate of ?"

And so we get several maxims, "Set a thief to catch a thief," or "There is no gamekeeper like the old poacher"; for he who shows most aptitude in the wrong direction would, if his talents were diverted to the opposite direction, assuredly be most successful ; or, the same idea differently expressed, "the worst men are the best men gone wrong" (*corruptio optimi pessima*).

A virtuous man is one who has the clearest perception of what is right and of what is wrong, and the immoral man is one who cannot perceive the distinction between right and wrong, just

as we say a pick-pocket has loose ideas upon "what is mine and what is thine."

In nature, the law of gravitation does exist, and must exist ; ignorance of the law is no excuse, and he who acts contrary to it, will most assuredly meet a painful end ; so in morals, there is, in the eternal fitness of things, a fundamental distinction between right and wrong ; ignorance of the law is no excuse, and he who neglects it will most assuredly meet an awful fate.

"Thou must not steal," our reason tells us, is law immutable and inexorable ; "The wages of sin is death," "Honesty is the best policy" ; of the truth of these reasons, apprehension, intellect (call it what you will) assures us, and to act contrary to them were contrary to reason—unreasonable, absurd as to deny that two and two make four.

Over and over again it has been demonstrated that "Murder will out," that dishonesty defeats its own ends ; and so, in this world, men have laid down such axioms as "Virtue is its own reward," "Honesty is the best policy"—formulae appealing to our heads, or what is called our "common sense."

And so, certain far-seeing people have applied these rules to eternity ; our reason tells us that, ultimately, after all is said and done, the immoral will be punished, the moral will emerge trium-

phant and rewarded ; in short, take a sufficiently far-seeing view of things, and immorality, wrongdoing, is hopelessly bad policy.

Work out the problem in a business-like way ; say you will live to be seventy. Are seventy years' happiness to be weighed in the balance with an eternity of torment ? Surely, there is no comparison ; common sense revolts from the bare conception.

Unfortunate, culpably blind, criminally careless, then, are those who fail to look at these things from the proper point of view, who are too weak to sacrifice a limited present for an unlimited future. As for us, let us insure ourselves ; it is an excellent speculation ; the premium is certainly far from light, days of self-sacrifice, delights foregone and pleasures shunned ; still—

“ Whatever, Lord, we lend to thee
Repaid a thousandfold shall be,
Gladly *then* we give to thee ! ”

Let us, then, quickly open an account with this Omnipotent Bank ; the interest paid, even in this world, is splendid—the reward which virtue of itself brings, and the worldly benefits of honesty, while the accumulations will purchase an eternity of joy.

From time immemorial have eloquent divines launched admonitory invective against the “ worldly,” but in these sinners, the children of

this world, is not infrequently found a tolerance, a good-humour, a staunchness and a charity not to be observed in those whom we might call the "other-worldly," those who, apprehensive for what they term their "latter end," have thus prudentially assured themselves against disasters which their less far-seeing brethren will most assuredly incur.

The prudent, the careful, the crafty and the cunning have inherited the earth and the fulness thereof; shall they also inherit the next world? Is morality but a sufficiently far-seeing selfishness, a glorified *savoir-vivre*? And how, according to this theory, shall little children escape the awful consequences of their innocence (which would in this case be ignorance)?

Obviously the surest way to lose the race which is for the prudent, the keen of apprehension, and the clever, would be to become again as little children.

If, further, morality is a thing of the head, if it requires brains, intellect, keenness of perception, to distinguish the right and the wrong, then the conduct of life becomes a kind of art, and a good liver, after a manner, an artist.

And so many have lived to imagine it, talking about "the art of living" or "the game of life," and referring to a "beautiful life" as one would refer to a beautiful picture.

For ourselves, we prefer to see a difficulty in the analogy ; a layman, destitute alike of artistic instinct and power of execution, is often perfectly capable of appreciating the beauties of a work of art, even as the sensualist may experience unbounded admiration for some frail woman's life of sacrifice ; alike the layman, uninspired by nature, unskilled to execute, may see the picture, and, beholding, say "this is art," and the sensualist, listening to the recital of the devoted life, exclaim "the conduct of this woman is right, and mine is wrong !" But, alas ! clearness of perception is not enough ; "reason of itself has no kinetic power—is unable to move to action."

It is one thing to be a moral philosopher, another to be moral ; and a man may say "it is in the eternal fitness of things that there should be laws of property, a distinction between "mine and thine," and my reason tells me that it is my duty to observe these laws. I clearly perceive that to tell a falsehood to my neighbour is, in principle, destructive of all that holds society together, of all that makes for good and security."

He may say all this, and much more, and yet be at once thief and liar.

Morality is not a thing of the head ; the simple, the unlearned and the childlike may even yet enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

To base one's calculations upon the assumption that two and two make five is "unreasonable," "absurd"; to base one's conduct on the assumption that one may always tell a falsehood to extricate one's self from a difficult corner is "wrong." And the "unreasonable" and the "wrong" are separated "by the whole diameter of being."

If, then, we find ourselves unable to believe that morality is entirely a thing of the head, that the absurd or the unreasonable are the same as the wrong, can we, rejecting this so-called rationalistic theory, accept what is styled that of the sentimentalists?

Briefly paraphrased it is this: man has six senses, not five, as commonly held; these senses are those of sight, touch, taste, hearing and smelling, and a moral sense. In other words, intuition or instinct tells a man what is right and what is wrong; he feels that this course of conduct is moral, the other immoral; without pondering or reflecting for an instant upon any projected action, there is that in him which either prompts him to perform it as good, or warns him against it as evil.

"The plain man," again to employ this philosophical lay-figure, instinctively feels reverence for the noble, and is repelled by the ignoble; he cannot help it, for just as an animal is attracted

by the pleasant and revolts from the painful, so does he, by virtue of this divinely implanted sense, yearn towards the moral and flee the immoral.

And so, we often hear of a judge characterizing some brutal murderer or treacherous seducer as "apparently devoid of all moral sense," implying that the man is abnormal, peculiar in that he lacks the sense of discriminating between right and wrong, and on a par with the deaf, the dumb or the blind ; he is not "whole,"—in the expressive and accurate vernacular, he is "not all there."

According to this theory, morality is not a thing of the head but a thing of the heart : feeling, emotion, sense inform him of the moral worth or worthlessness of an action.

There is that which is black ; there is that which is white ; there is that which is sweet and that which is sour, there is that which is loud and that which is low, and there is that which is wrong and that which is right ; alike upon all, the senses report, and as the discrimination between the black and white depends upon the sense of sight, so does the determination of what is right and what is wrong rest with the moral sense.

And herein lies the difficulty ; if the sense of sight and the moral sense are parallel, wherein lies the superior power of the latter, what claim

has it to consideration not possessed by each of the other senses ?

Our sense of taste tells us " this wine is good," our moral sense says " this wine is bad " ; how does it belong to the report of one sense to override that of another ?

We cannot but feel that this is good to the taste, and also feel that, morally, it is bad. But why should that which the palate pronounces " good," yield to that which another sense pronounces " bad " ?

A gentleman called Buridanus once had a donkey, and one day there were placed, on each side of this ass, two bundles of hay ; between these two bundles there was no difference in size, and both were equally sweet to the nostril, equally inviting in aspect. Uncertain, the donkey stood, feet firmly planted mid-way between either bundle, for neither bundle by superior attraction, could induce him to move either this way or that ; and so, in course of time, that donkey starved, for neither the one bundle nor the other was touched ; equally attractive, there was nothing in either to persuade the donkey to neglect the other.

And these things are an allegory ; one bundle of hay is composed of the pleasures of this world which certain senses pronounce to be good ; the other bundle of hay is the satisfaction which

the moral sense likewise pronounces to be good. Each pronouncement is intuitive ; instinctive and immediate the sense gives its verdict ; which is to be gainsaid ?

From one point of view, it is good to broach that bottle of wine, for thus shall we satisfy our sense of taste ; from another point of view it is good to leave it untouched, for thus shall we gratify the moral sense. Here is no "duty," no "obligation," no inexorable imperative ; one of six, the moral sense has claims equal to, but no greater than, the other five, and we are no whit more justified in saying that the gratification of one is moral, than that to neglect the claims of the other is immoral. We might regret having failed to satisfy such a moral sense, as we should regret having failed to take advantage of an opportunity to behold a beautiful scene, or to eat a sumptuous dinner, but of that remorse, which, in point of fact, does follow the doing that which we ought not to do or leaving undone that which we ought to do, there is none.

The great Bishop Butler saw this difficulty and met it thus : this moral sense, said he, is like unto the others in that it is inborn in us, intuitive and instinctive ; but it is unlike the others in that it has an authority the other lacks ; though a feeling or an emotion, the other feelings are subject to it : failure to obey it brings more

than regret—it brings remorse, for this feeling, this sense, is equal to the others as touching its origin, greater than the others as touching its power, and its name is “conscience.”

This, of course, falls in with common phraseology ; we all talk of our “sense of honour,” of the pricking of our conscience, thereby implying that our sense of honour is paramount to and is possessed of superior authority to (for example) our sense of taste, and that the gnawing of hunger is not to be allayed at the expense of a pricking conscience.

We hope, however, to show how it has been held that neither the head nor the heart tell us what is wrong and what is right, but that it is the whole man, not one part of him, that alone can say “this is right,” or “that is wrong.”

“Tell me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart or in the head ?
How begot, how nourished ?
It is engendered in the eyes,
With gazing fed ; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.”

So must it be with all that fancy prompts us to ; something of caprice there must always be in all the clamourings of the senses : the eye lusteth after something, and no sooner is the sense gratified than the fancy dies almost as soon as it is born.

On a par with this "fancy" thus "engendered in the eyes, with gazing fed" is, according to this school of thought, the moral sense; let this be proved to be the case, and at once vanish from the world's vocabulary all such words as "ought" or "duty": pleasant, expedient or becoming it may be to gratify this and all the other senses; that it is our duty so to do, no one can persuade us.

Somewhat akin to this theory is that of Herbert Spencer; as we have just seen, there are, according to this school, six senses, and duty consists of the triumph of one over all and each of the others; Herbert Spencer holds that duty consists of the sacrifice of the present pleasure to the future. Now the views of "the plain man" or "the man in the street" must, of necessity, largely coincide with this tenet; bewildered, wearied, and dejected this evening, I am tempted to throw responsibility to the winds and sally forth to seek oblivion in a reckless dissipation; "a martyr to indigestion," that venison pie makes my lips water, and would assuredly be the source of much immediate and direct pleasure; himself on the brink of an exposure, at home an ailing wife and famished bright-eyed children, how easy for the clerk just "to borrow" from that safe, confident of his capacity to repay it almost immediately, and no one the worse for

the temporary loan ! and what a satisfaction to bring back the colour to the cheek of that sad, wan wife he loves so well as she watches her children, happy and incurious, once again sufficiently fed !

And yet duty lies not this way ; this immediate, direct pleasure must be postponed, and in time the sorrow shall be overpast ; in the morning joy shall come, " the stern joy that warriors feel," and, in place of the simple, direct and unworthy pleasure of the moment, there shall be a pleasure more complex, more abiding and infinitely worthier.

That the position that man holds in regard to the rest of the animal kingdom, the position held by the English in regard, say, to that of the Turks, the position held, say, by yonder strong self-contained self-made man in the carriage in regard to yonder blear-eyed wretch just slouching into the *Three Cups* is, none can deny, largely due to the sacrifice of an immediate, clamouring, simple, obvious pleasure to a satisfaction dim, complex, remote and apparently all but unreal.

To some such process as the surrender of the present to the future, to the faith which prompts such a sacrifice, and the strength of mind which makes it possible, we owe " the protrusion of man from the animal kingdom," the advance of civilization, the triumphs of intellect, all the

infinite, labour-saving, time-annihilating inventions which go to make the Western nations so prominent.

As an excellent and attractive description of a process which does undoubtedly take place, the man in the street must hail this explanation of Herbert Spencer's as stimulating, suggestive and strengthening: helpful and inspiring it cannot fail to be. Yet, there are those who will not accept this explanation. Man, they urge, is not animal: he is something else than a mere aggregate of feelings. Let a man live seventy years and let every minute of every hour of every day of those seventy years be occupied to the full by the gratification of a sense, the experience of some pleasure: in the end, and after all these things, that man will be dissatisfied.

As may be seen, those who hold that morality consists of the supremacy of one sense over five other senses, and Herbert Spencer maintaining that morality consists of the sacrifice of the demand for a present pleasure to the demand for a future, more remote, pleasure, must stand and fall together.

Both rest on the assumption that man has senses, five or six, it matters little how many, and that his life is composed of one feeling following another, the gratification of one sense succeeding that of another.

On the other hand, those who hold that reason, thought or the brain gives us our conception of duty depend upon the assumption that to know the right and to do the right are necessarily identical, and that mere intellectual discrimination can compel a man to act in accordance with its judgment.

We have endeavoured to show that man is neither entirely reason nor entirely feeling: neither heart of itself nor head of itself can give us that which we must do, and that which it is wrong to leave undone.

It remains to criticize Kant's theory, that the reason, the intellect, perceives that which is our duty and that our feeling, our emotion, leads us, seeing that it is good and noble, to reverence it, appreciate its nobility and act upon it.

Only that which this reverence for the law prompts us to do, is moral: only that, in other words, which we do or leave undone because it is our duty so to act, is good: anything done or left undone for any other motive whatever is immoral, evil.

By criticizing this theory, and showing up the weak points thinkers have detected in it, we hope to indicate wherein that school of thought which we would especially present to the "man in the street" holds morality to consist.

“DUTY FOR DUTY’S SAKE.”

It is not here our intention to enter upon a laboured recapitulation of Kantism or its blood relations, Stoicism or Puritanism, but merely to indicate to the layman the philosophical expression of that distrust and instinctive dislike which everybody must feel for a creed of such rigidity and hopelessness.

And so, the consideration of many points, such as the “autonomous self,” the “categorical imperative” shall be omitted as better suited to a more technical work.

What claims our immediate attention is the Kantian conception of a moral action, as one performed, simply and exclusively, for duty’s sake, entirely out of the reverence we feel for the command issued to our reason. Broadly, objectors have thus conceived of Kant’s theory, and, as largely identical, that of the Stoic and the Puritan.

“Inasmuch as we are rational, have reason, are we related to God and are good : inasmuch

as we have bodies, we are of the world, we feel the cares and affections of the world, and are therefore evil,” says Kant in effect.

Reverence for the law, admiration of that supreme command which each man recognizes and is bound to recognize in him, is, as having its source in pure reason, entirely independent of all the demands of this sinful world (that is, in other words, prompted by that part of us which is good and in no way considering or taking account of that part of us which is bad) must prompt any good action which we perform.

“ Now,” say the objectors to this theory, “ a man who does what is right simply out of reverence or admiration for duty, is in the position of the man who says ‘ he loves God and hateth his brother ; ’ in other words, for which we have scriptural justification, ‘ he is a liar. ’ ”

“ The Lord loveth a cheerful giver,” but Kant’s and the Puritan’s esteem is reserved for the unwilling contributor ; not because you sympathize with, appreciate, and jump at a chance of relieving a fellow creature’s misfortunes, says Kant, must you give alms, but simply and solely because your reason tells you it is your inexorable duty so to do, and you reverence this command your reason thus lays upon you.

If a man love his neighbour as himself, says the New Testament, then he cannot but act

rightly : all that the Law and the Prophets can enjoin upon him from the outside will then be superfluous, for inside that man will be a law greater than these.

“No,” says Kant (again we paraphrase boldly, not, we think, inaccurately) “love for your neighbour is of this world, sinful, and incapable of leading aright ; inasmuch as we are prompted by this, we act gladly, willingly, to avoid the pain disregard of this affection would bring upon us ; we must act from a pure, unmixed, sense of duty, utterly regardless of inclination or affection, paying no consideration to what will bring us pain or pleasure.”

Very obvious, then, is the misery, the hopelessness of the virtuous life, where virtue is simply the painful observance of duty or “duty for duty’s sake,” and Kant fully recognizes this.

He disposes of the difficulty, as we have before indicated, thus : Since it is obvious that the virtuous man cannot be happy in this world, and since we must in some way reward virtue by happiness, he must be happy in the next. To bring this about, then, to effect this compensation, there must be a God, who shall reward the righteous and punish the wicked.

Now, it is not here our purpose to discuss the inadequacy, the unworthiness, the ignominy of a Deity whose only reason for existing is such

as this, but rather to point out that a conception of duty such as this is untrue to life and derogatory to human nature. On what grounds this is held to be the case has already been indicated.

We have already referred to Kantism, Stoicism and Puritanism as an extreme, just as hedonism, or the philosophy of pleasure, is also an extreme.

Now, while the latter holds that the senses, the feelings, the emotions are supreme, and that their gratification is the natural end of our being, the former, urging the contrary extreme, would have it that these are in themselves evil and immoral, and that reason, pure reason, that which alone can reveal to us our duty, is moral or good. Wherein the hedonistic theory errs, and errs fundamentally, we have attempted to demonstrate: it remains to be submitted how this austere and painful doctrine is every whit as much an extreme as the other, and how it is equally as untrue to what experience, reflection and faith cannot but hold to be the true facts of life.

Take, for example, the case of a man who has some good cause at heart, or that of some self-denying woman whose whole life is one devoted endeavour for the sake of those she loves: herein, says Kant, true morality does not lie, for that which prompts this enthusiasm for a cause, and

that from which issues this woman's self-sacrifice is of this world, natural, and, consequently, evil:

Now much depends upon this peculiar use of the word "natural," to which we shall afterwards assign a distinct interpretation.

"Natural," says a certain dictionary, which would appear to have sacrificed luminosity to what it terms "conciseness," is "that which pertains to natural," while the nature of a thing is "that which it originally was, out of which it has developed."

"Natural," according to Kant, must be applied to those things which are subject to the laws of nature, to cause and effect, and we must therefore include among them desire, impulse, affection, sympathy, antipathy, etc., in so far as all these are due to the reaction of things external to us upon our susceptibilities; just as the craving for drink is purely physical, the outcome of heredity, environment, and bodily constitution, so are our loves and hatreds, our aspirations and our desires: all are alike the effect of a cause, and, as such, are of this world, which is a sinful world: that alone from which can proceed morality is reason, reason pure and undefiled, in that it is independent of and superior to all those laws of nature which govern this world.

In short, the "natural" is evil, the "rational"

is good. And so we get the ultimate conception of Kantism, Stoic, Puritanic morality—the suppression of appetite, desire, the negation of all that appeals to our senses.

Our life is to be the arena of one long struggle between reason, that which divines our duty, and feeling, that which is evil. Hunger is but the sensation of an appetite, the craving of nature, physical effect of a physical cause.

He, then, says Kant, who eats simply because he wishes to, is therein acting immorally, because he is obeying the dictates of nature, responding to the demands of his senses, and not acting in accordance with the dictates of “ pure reason.” Were the same man, longing for extinction, tempted to seek death by starvation, then would the act of eating be moral, as dictated by that reason which, apart from all consideration of fleshly lusts or sensual desire, says to him “ herein lies your duty ” ?

Thus it comes to pass that music, appealing merely to a sense of this world, the physical cause of a physical effect, is evil, and all those apparently innocent gratifications of our natural selves are actually immoral inasmuch as not indulged in from a pure sense of duty—

“ Such harmony is in immortal souls :
But, whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.”

And so, in order that we may hear this harmony, attain to that perfection which exists alone in our souls, let us suppress those affections, those desires which are but the reaction of this sinful world upon poor fleeting bodies of clay ; for the flesh is contrary to the spirit, and reason must subdue nature !

Thus, then, Kant argues that our bodies, the vesture of decay, base, material and earthly, are, *ipso facto*, evil : morality consists of the triumph of reason over feeling, and immorality of all not done from the pure sense of duty.

We will now consider another form of what we hope to demonstrate a paradox, a form which has gained much notoriety under the name of " Christian Science."

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CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

THE tenets of Christian Science, considered in relation to those of the doctrines we have paraphrased, may be briefly propounded.

Man, says the hedonist, is purely material, physical, of this world : his pleasure consists in the reaction of the external world upon himself, his susceptibilities, his organism, and, whether this pleasure be of the mind or of the body, be it poetry or be it ping-pong, his pleasure is merely the effect of a cause and, as such, dependent upon a law of nature ; in other words, everything is matter, and the mind, every bit as much as the body, is material and subject to the laws of the physical world : man is wholly natural.

Not so, says Kant : man is partly natural and partly rational : in part in this world, possessing a body subject to all the natural laws of growth and decay common to animals and plants, he nevertheless is, in part, not of this world, inasmuch as he participates in pure

reason, that reason which, unlike his intellect, is subject to no human, natural changes or vicissitudes, unaffected by digestion or environment, is not even supernatural in that it has no connexion with the natural—has no part in the temporal, in the things that are seen, but is akin only to the eternal, universal: this pure reason it is which divines man's duty, that which is absolute and changeless. To obey the dictates of this reason is morality, to act from any other influence is immorality.

Thus, speaking, of course, very roughly, we have, so far, two great doctrines—that of the materialist:—all is matter or mind, the latter, of course, being but a particular manifestation of the former; and that of Kant:—there are both matter and spirit, but the former is evil and exists only to be put into subjection to the latter, which is good.

The next conception is that of Christian Science: this, in its turn, differs from the materialist who claims that all is matter, and from Kant who holds that matter, though essentially evil, does exist, and submits that, mind or spirit or rationality, or what its adherents style "spiritual understanding," alone exists, and that matter (our bodies, the earth, the Tower of London) is, in point of fact, non-existent.

An immediate corollary of this is, of course,



that pain is likewise non-existent, for is not pain a physical effect of a physical cause, and have we not assumed that what is physical is purely imaginary, fictitious, non-existent ?

Since then, pain and sickness being non-existent, as accidents of matter which does not actually exist, since flesh is but matter, corporeal substance, and matter is but a something supposed by the mind to exist, and since the ills that flesh is heir to are consequently non-existent, it necessarily follows that ordinary medical treatment is totally in error : the physical, the material do not exist, and medical treatment, usually aiming at removing, by operation or by drug, the physical effect of a physical cause, is a gigantic mistake, a huge misapplication of energy.

And so we get the "Peculiar People," by this time such familiar figures in our police courts : medicine and drugs are mere "senseless matter," and a doctor, one who professes to cure by base material matter, invented by the children of darkness, mere humans.

Faith, thought, "spiritual understanding," are alone omnipotent to cure : to call in a doctor, in a case of illness is to rely upon the wisdom of the children of this world—cure can be effected by faith, thought, prayer, spiritual understanding, as first consciously vouchsafed to Mrs. Eddy.

Christ performed His acts of healing, cleansing

and forgiving by no miraculous power granted to Him alone, but by virtue of faith in the Almighty, and "whosoever hath a like faith shall do these things and greater than these."

A short time ago, we remember, the papers recorded that one of these Peculiar People, suffering from a broken leg, wrapped a page from a Bible round his toe, and, we assume, trusted to "spiritual understanding" to "do the rest." The leg was not made whole. Perchance, one is tempted to be grateful that these people are peculiar, and to hope that they may long continue to be distinct from the rest of mankind: we are, however, informed that "Christian Science can count to-day among its followers in both hemispheres professional men and women of the highest class, scholarly ecclesiastics, students of both sexes with brilliant university records, officers of high scientific attainments in both services, statesmen, judges, lawyers, philosophers and doctors."

Coming, as it does, from the mouth of an English peer of the realm, this statement cannot be regarded as requiring to be savoured with the proverbial grain of salt, but one cannot help fearing that the last-named gentlemen will find their "peculiarities" somewhat opposed to their professional ambitions. Among "the professional men of the highest class" we do not

notice any mention of "authors," yet we have a distinct recollection that the talented author of *Illumination* was, at the time of his unseasonable death, a Christian Scientist.

Dr. Johnson is related to have subjected the theories of Bishop Berkeley to the childish practical test of kicking his foot against a wall, and rhetorically asking if "the painful result, sir, was imaginary?" Doubtless, were he alive, he would recommend to Mrs. Eddy some equally brutal and straightforward test.

To those who are sorrowfully convinced that they are actually clothed about in the vesture of decay, that matter does exist, and that their "too, too solid flesh" and all the ills it is heir to are facts to be reckoned with, we hope to show that the flesh, its desires, inclinations and affections, are not, as Kant would have it, necessarily evil, and do not exist for the sole cause of being subjugated to the spirit.

“THE HOUSE OF A BRUTE.”

“KNOW ye not that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost?” Surely this question could not be put with more force of point than to the Kantian? As having reference to the tenets of this school, it is especially significant. The flesh, with all its attendant desires and inclinations is not, then, after all, a thing of evil, nor is it of pre-ordained necessity in direct opposition to reason or the spirit, neither is its sole *raison d'être* that of being negated by, subjugated to, this spirit. Moreover, in answer to the Christian Scientist, throughout the Bible, emphasis is laid upon the actual existence of the flesh and all its attendant evils; just as it is impossible to satisfy man, who, though a little lower than the angels, is a little higher than the beasts, by purely physical means, so it is equally futile to attempt to cure physical ills by spiritual means; for good or for evil, we must take facts as they are, and of those, pain and sickness, inevitable adjuncts to material existence, are surely among the most undeniable and present: whosoever were to have a faith like unto Christ's

would most undoubtedly be able to cure bodily disease by the mere effort of a believing will, but for ourselves to lay claim to such faith, with all its potentialities, is to fly in the face of facts and be beyond measure presumptuous.

Were we to deny the existence of pain and sickness for all who had faith and “ spiritual understanding,” would not much of the merit of Christ’s atonement be wanting ? And did not Christ, when He restored the sight of the man who was born blind, anoint his eyes with clay and bid him wash in the Pool of Siloam, and was it not after the employment of these physical remedies that the man saw ?

We cannot escape from facts by denying their existence : in some future existence there shall be neither time nor space, neither marriage nor giving in marriage, but the time is not yet. Here we are, most emphatically, still cribb’d, cabin’d and confined, beset by all the limitations inevitable to this vesture of decay, and most incontrovertibly sojourning in a vale of tears ; our problem is, how we may so pass through it, that we may use it as a well.

“ The Lord let the house of a brute to the soul of a man,
And the man said, ‘ Am I your debtor ? ’
And the Lord—‘ Not yet—but make it as clean as
you can,
And then I will let you a better.’ ”

Much as we may deplore our 'unfortunate ancestry, it is useless to deny it : it is the material we have to deal with, given which we have to work out our salvation, and man must still pray "for the things which are still requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul" : the inclinations, the affections and lusts of the flesh, the joys of life and the ills of the body are not evil, as Kant would have it, nor non-existent as the Christian Scientist would have it : they are "circumstances" which we may suffer to lead us or may turn to our own uses, making all their glorious possibilities subserve our own ends.

In themselves, then, our bodies are neither good nor evil : they are the raw material which we are to work upon : we had almost said that they were the machinery of our lives, and upon the work we give it to do, upon the direction in which we turn it, depends its character—good or evil.

And so with the senses, clamouring for gratification ; it is natural that they should thus demand satisfaction, and so far there is neither good nor evil : the appetite for food, the striving after revenge, the longing for fame, the sexual instinct, the sympathy which stimulates to alms-giving, are all instinctive and natural : upon the use we make of them depends their moral worth or worthlessness ; so far they are

colourless and as devoid of guile or of merit as a calf's love for its mother's milk.

So far these are but wishes, desires ; springing up naturally, they are but the inclinations and affections of our animal nature : as such we are not responsible for them, and they have no moral character ; they are scarcely voluntary, and to call them of themselves evil, with Kant, is to condemn the workings of nature. In like manner, to take credit for them and to count ourselves charitable men because we have the desire to do good to our fellow men is to pride ourselves upon that over which we have no control : if morality depended upon sentiment, sympathy, impulse or caprice, the virtuous man, like the poet, would be “ born, not made.”

As with the heart, so with the head : the heart instinctively yearns for fame, revenge, self-gratulation, but herein is no merit, no guilt : so with the head ; man proposes an end for himself : he reasons about the respective advantages of two courses of conduct, and says “ verily this thing is heroic and that is despicable,” yet neither herein is either merit or guilt.

So far, we deal only with wishes : a man's heart may prompt him to aid a brother in distress, and he consequently wishes to do so : his head may dictate such and such a course of action on the ground, say, that honesty is the

best policy : he may consequently be said to wish to pursue this course of conduct.

Should this man get no further than these wishes, he would embark upon no action : so far, he is but the arena in which certain promptings contest : but he cannot be but the arena—he must be the contestant himself, not the mere scene of the contest.

The road to hell is paved with good intentions, and of a surety such wishes, such inclinations, though they tear his soul in twain, have no compelling force to lead a man upwards. The man must select one of these wishes, either a prompting of the heart or a recommendation of the head, and make it part of his will : he must, as it has been well put, identify himself with it, and, this done, it is henceforth part of himself ; hereafter, having taken up this wish so that it forms part of his personality, that man must stand or fall by it.

“ Not everyone that sayeth unto me Master, Master,”—not all the sweet yearnings of an undisciplined heart, not all the dictates of a shrewd, far-seeing intellect shall get a man into the Kingdom of Heaven : for these he is neither to blame nor to praise—“ by their fruit ye shall know them.”

“ My poverty, but not my will consents,” says the apothecary, in *Romeo and Juliet*, as if a man

were a passive looker-on while his poverty struggled with his better motives, but this is not the case : man is not of such a nature that he can thus be carried away on the stronger of two conflicting emotional tides ; the apothecary must have definitely sided with the case presented to himself by his poverty : he perpetrated a distinct act of volition, and identified himself with these considerations.

Often does a man throw in his lot with the weaker desire and overcome the stronger : had a man not this power of, so to speak, merging the weaker wish in his personality and thus prevailing against the stronger, it would go ill with the business of the world ; in the case of a moral conflict, the battle most emphatically does not necessarily go to the stronger. The heart may overcome the head, or the head the heart, but neither can take the credit to itself ; that which prevails prevails only by reason of the personality which adopts it and says “ for good or evil I take you up, and henceforth I consent to be judged along with you and by you.”

And so, this latter-day philosophy does not believe in a moral sense and refuses to allow that any man shall gain salvation by submitting to the clamourings of emotion, neither does it believe that to act morally is merely to act

reasonably and obey the dictates of a far-seeing intellect, nor yet would it brand all natural inclinations and affections as evil and claim that the good man must be led by a pure sense of duty which considers not the things of the world. Rather does it accept these affections, these desires, and recognizing them as instruments of salvation, treat them as material which may be used or abused according as the "self," the personality, shall will.

 "Let us not always say
 'Spite of this flesh to-day
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole.'
 As the bird wings and sings,
 Let us cry 'All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh
 helps soul.'"

THE SELF—I

To some extent, a man is not responsible for his emotions or his thoughts : often, involuntarily and in spite of himself, he experiences a passionate longing for a certain thing, for revenge, or for fame, and often, involuntarily, in a moment of time, he has planned such or such a course of action ; so far, this longing, this projected plan, this emotion, this thought is independent of his real self, his "centre of reference," and, being involuntary (or, as Aristotle would say "not voluntary"), are neither moral nor immoral.

To make them wrong or right, to tinge them with moral colour, he must make them his own ; his personality, his self must compare this emotion, this plan, with other competing emotions and other plans and, selecting one, act upon it ; then and then only can you judge that man : alike the saintly preacher has his moments of passionate desire for sensual indulgence, and the reckless sensualist his fervent longings for a

better life ; the best of men are at times startled by the skill with which they can plan, say, a daring robbery, and by the ingenuity with which they could escape detection : it is thus that alike head and heart work independently of the "self" ; it is thus "Castles in Spain" are erected without the consciousness of the architect. Briefly, man is responsible only for that which he does voluntarily, only for that, among all his conflicting impulses and emotions, plans and projects upon which he deliberately acts, and in turn, this choice, this selection of what he is to act upon, very obviously depends upon his character—upon what manner of man he is.

We are all acquainted with what we call "the universe of discourse," many words depend largely for their meaning upon their context, the reference in which they are used, upon the world in which we are at the time moving : examples are numerous, especially, foreigners tell us, in the English language : the word "indifferent" if attributed to character has a distinctly bad sense ; as used in the Prayer Book in connexion with the administration of justice, it carries with it a most praise-worthy meaning.

A certain excellent text-book of ethics has drawn a very just parallel between the "universe of speech" and the "universe of desire." It

points out that as "one man in his lifetime plays many parts," so he is a member of many different worlds ; for instance, he may belong to the world of business in the morning, the world of sport in the afternoon and the literary world in the evening, while on Sundays he may belong to the religious world. In these different worlds, how various, for example, is the meaning of the word "good" : "a good man" in the world of sport, say a good man "at the hundred yards," is by no means necessarily a "good" business man or a "good" man, in the religious sense. And so it is with the "universe of desire" : upon the world we live in, upon the thoughts which occupy us, upon the ambition which may be ours, upon our state of mind, depends the fate of our emotions, our desires.

A student has an absorbing wish to read a certain popular novel, and little or no wish to read *Locke on the Human Understanding*, and yet the stronger desire may go to the wall, and he may make the weaker his own, because he is in the universe of duty or ambition : in this universe, the desire to read the popular novel has a very different meaning from that which it would have were the man moving in the "universe of pleasure," if the student, say, were on his holidays.

And so, Pope said, "most women have no

character at all," meaning that their "universe of desire" changes so often, that what seems good to them at one time so entirely differs from that which recommends itself to them at another, that you never say of a woman "oh, this cause is bound to approve itself to the charitable Mrs. ——" because this lady may now be living in an entirely different "universe of desire," so that the cause which she once had so much at heart may now appear to her a foolish enthusiasm.

Thus, a man friendless, hopeless and bitter gives way to the craving for drink ; the same man hits upon a discovery which will set him on his feet and bring him fame and wealth, and puts aside this craving, Why ? because he has the craving no longer, or in a less degree ? Not a bit of it ! The man is now living in a different universe—in a different world, in which all things have a different value : the pleasure which aforetime he reckoned of all things most priceless, appears to him now despicable and unworthy : he still has the same desires, the same impulses, perhaps intensified, but, in so far as he is now, to all intents and purposes, in a different world, in the universe of hope and ambition, things have a different value, a different meaning to him.

And so, the result of this great, never-ceasing contest which goes on and must go on within a man, depends entirely upon a man's universe of

desire, in other words, upon his "self," his "personality"; he may be a man of strong passions or a shrewd, keen and far-seeing man, it matters not: these qualities of heart and head are questions, maybe, of capacity, natural endowment, but they are not questions of "character"; the character, the personality is that which makes use of this passion, overcomes that inclination, exhibits for his own purpose that keenness of apprehension and will have nothing to do with that dishonest ingenuity.

And so, the question set the moral philosopher, is how to produce such a character, such a self, such a personality, that what appears good or honest or of good repute to it, is actually and in point of fact, good and honest and of good repute. No matter how strong the passions, how cunning the understanding, the man himself, or the man's self, shall make use of them and enlist them as worthy means for his end, or shall reject them as worthless.

Now this work does not profess to be a code of rules for the formation of morality, neither does it aim at suggesting the way by which a perfect character may be produced; it would only presume to paraphrase certain conceptions of morality as entertained by certain thinkers.

Nevertheless, one or two hints may perhaps be taken from the most practical of ancient

philosophers, as not unworthy the modern man-in-the-street's attention.

The miser, says Aristotle, begins by collecting money as a means to an end ; he ends by collecting money as an end in itself. While engaged in collecting money as a means for, say, pleasure or social position, he begins to appreciate the pleasure of the mere possession of money, its intrinsic beauty, and henceforth his wealth is valuable to him, not as a medium of exchange, but as inherently, and independently of any outside consideration, desirable.

So, he says in effect, it is with virtue ; virtuous actions, primarily entered upon as a means to an end, at last reveal their intrinsic beauty, and are sought for their own sakes.

And herein, is much that is excellent : to the child that is good which pleases his mother, that is "naughty" which displeases her ; hence much of the terrible responsibility which attaches to the parent, and the immense importance of her standards of right and wrong coinciding with the real standards ; afterwards, the child will recognize the "why and the wherefore ;" at present, virtue is more or less mechanical, and a virtuous habit must be formed.

Kant's dictum that a virtuous action must be done from the pure sense of duty is impracticable ; much that is noblest in the world is done

from no such motive, but is inspired by brotherly love or natural affection.

As with the many so with the individual ; a certain asceticism is a necessary first stage in all morality, and ,man being neither good nor evil naturally, the beginnings of morality are necessarily in some degree painful—not merely the pleasurable gratification of impulse, or a reasonable obedience to the dictates of common sense. “The law is a schoolmaster to lead us unto Christ ” and the first steps in morality must be dictated by an outside force ; later, when the man has recognized the spirit which informed the letter of his childhood’s law, when he can appreciate the intrinsic beauty of virtue, then shall he become a law unto himself. The virtue which at first was a means to an end is become an end in itself.

Aristotle says that virtue consists in what we may translate as the “unreasonable parts of us,” and what we may specify as our passions, our affections and our emotions, becoming obedient to “reason” : at first this reason is imposed upon us from without ; later, when we have, so to speak, arrived at the age of discretion, it is a law dwelling in us.

A man does not turn from vice to virtue by suddenly beginning to act from “the pure sense of duty” ; first must come the almost mechanical

and necessarily painful stage of obedience, of the formation of a virtuous habit ; he must be acquainted with virtuous acts, and, appreciating them for their own worth, he at last becomes virtuous.

Aristotle lays great stress upon the importance of "habit," and those who have read any psychology will fully appreciate the advantages of handing actions over to what has well been called "the effortless custody of habit": a habit, says Aristotle, issues in like actions to those which go to form it, and he illustrates this by the "habit of health." The habit of health, he says, is produced by eating plenty and taking plenty of exercise, and issues in exactly the same actions.

So with virtuous habits ; the actions which go to form the habit, are, perhaps, painful, mechanical, accidental, but, the habit once formed, the same virtuous actions issue from it, but now pleurably and naturally.

There is no royal road to morality ; there is much that cannot come but by prayer and fasting, and no school of philosophy can show us a path that does not pass through the formation of habit.

Man, says Aristotle, aims at self-satisfaction, at self-realization, and a man's nature is to be what he has it in him to be.

But let not man forget his greatness ; let him

not attempt to satisfy or to realize himself by mere gratification of his senses : these indeed have their uses, and may all be employed as means to ends : the desire for revenge, the sexual passion, the longing for fame or recognition, all have their uses, as exemplified by the courts of justice, the family and, say, the Victoria Cross ; but the gratification of these for their own sakes, as ends in themselves, aiming at the mere surplus of pleasure over pain, is inadequate to satisfy a man, and can but leave him empty ; that disappointment, remorse and misery is inevitably dependent upon any such attempt to satisfy the whole man, by the gratification of the part, cannot be too strongly insisted upon. The realization of self means something beyond the gratification of all or every desire which the heart of man can experience. It means the perfection of a personality which, above and beyond all emotion, all desire and all affection, can yet turn these emotions, desires and affections to good account, and, by means of their satisfaction, which is of the day, temporal, attain its own, which is for all time, eternal.

THE SELF—II

THE “self-realization” of Aristotle is a very different thing from that which we are wont to call self-satisfaction ; to a large extent, indeed, they are incompatible one with another.

Everything, says Aristotle, has its function, and only in so far as it performs that function is it what it was intended to be : that which performs its functions realizes its self—attains its end.

The man then, in whom every component part has full play, discharges that function to discharge which it was created, can alone be said to “realize himself”—and this self-realization is happiness—content—blessedness—well-being ; whatever we choose to call it, it is, in effect, that pleasure which inevitably attends the performance of duty, that harmony which comes alone from a perfect adjustment of ends to means. Any attempt to realize the whole self by the satisfaction of a part—whether it be the attempt of the “man of pleasure” to realize an infinite

self by administering to the finite clamourings of sensuality, or whether it be the attempt of the anchorite to attend alone to the infinite and neglect the just demands of natural appetites—any such attempt is necessarily foredoomed to failure, and inevitably brings with it remorse for a life mis-spent, and the bitter, unavailing repinings of a soul plunged in darkness.

The life, then, which is thus to attain this happiness, this pleasure, this sense of well-being, must be active, creative, militant and strenuous ; it cannot be merely passive, receptive, inert.

Not that which goeth into the man, defileth a man, but that which cometh out ; in like manner a man shall find salvation in that which goeth out of him ; for that which goeth out of him, that which he says and does, is henceforth part of himself.

In a passage we have before referred to, Plato says that if knowledge and morality are identical—if to know the right is the same as to do the right—then the most ingenious thief, only give his talents the right direction, would be the best magistrate—best able to deal with thieves.

Perhaps this is so, but we must not forget that between these two there is fixed an immeasurable gulf, in that the one man is guilty of thefts, and the other is not ; “ by their fruits ye shall know them,” and not all the cunning,

all the intellectual keenness in the world shall save a man from being cast into the fire.

In so far as the two men are clever, ingenious, subtle, they are on a par ; in so far as the one actively wills to be a thief, and the other actively wills to oppose thefts and thieving—in so far are they infinitely separate.

We do well, then, to rejoice that these things are hid from the wise and the prudent, and revealed unto babes, and that morality depends not upon profundity of insight, upon the beauty of emotional aspiration, but upon the sheer will to do that which is right.

Nothing in the world is particular, says the logician ; in other words, nothing happens in a moment of time, and then is gone for ever, leaving no trace behind it, and having no influence upon what comes after it.

Our every word, our every action go to form our character, and upon our character, our personality, depend our every word, our every action, in the future.

Our life is continuous, every part absolutely determined and conditioned by that which comes before it : it is like a chain, continuous and unbroken, and the strength of a chain is the strength of its weakest link.

Men, guilty of a crime or a grievous mistake, often plead that it was an "isolated instance,"

foreign to their character, and that they “do not know how they came to do such a thing.”

The strength of a chain is the strength of its weakest link, and the naked fact stands out that their character was, must have been, of such a trend as to render such an act possible; that we were ignorant of this weakness in our character is very possible, yet we are none the less responsible for it. In babyhood, perhaps, or early youth, the seed was sown—some action was performed, some word was spoken, and since nothing is without its influence, nothing can come into being without leaving its traces—it is for the full grown man to reap: “Cast your bread upon the waters, and ye shall find it after many days.”

“From nothing, nothing comes”: every effect has its cause. Fashioned after the image of Christ, we are gifted with free-will, endowed, alone of all creatures, with the power to brush aside inclination, passion, mere wishes, and to say “I will.”

Yet, though, thus not of the world, we are in the world, and in the world the law of cause and effect is inexorable.

A single word, a solitary action, makes us different men, and leaves its mark, ineffaceable, upon our character.

The “isolated instance,” the “extenuating

circumstance," are the subterfuge of the irresponsible ; it is our character which makes the "isolated instance" possible, and it is just because we are what we are that the "extenuating circumstance" had power to overcome our resistance. From this law of cause and effect it is impossible to get away : living in the world, we are necessarily subject to all the laws by which it is governed. Upon a man's character, his personality, upon what a man is, depends what he wills to do, and conversely, upon what a man wills to do, depends his character ; but, the moment a distinct act of volition is perpetrated, the moment a word is said, an action performed, that word, that action, shall go down the ages, and, subject to this inexorable law, its effects are fixed and assured ; recorded in the book, no power in this world can delete them.

"If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth ; and if a tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there shall it lie."

We live in an orderly world ; cosmos not chaos is around us ; the hairs of our heads are numbered ; we have more value than many sparrows, and we have a destiny beyond the grave.

Not the puppets of some blind world-force, each man can work out his own salvation. "The

tree is known by its fruit," and upon ourselves lies the terrible responsibility of making, by our any effort of will, a good tree or a bad tree.

For the great law of cause and effect we would claim more than is usually claimed for it, by those who write of the force of habit.

For, whereas a habit can scarcely be conceived to issue from a single action, we believe it to be the case that any action, of a certain nature, does, actually and as a matter of fact, generate an inclination to the performance of another act, identical in nature.

Given one single action of any kind whatsoever, and its incidence shall send forth an echo which shall henceforward reverbrate, till the end of the ages, down the corridors of time.

Of such a nature are our conditions ; thus are we limited, and with these conditions and these limitations we must reckon. Earth-born, let us have no part with the wanton childishness of the Christian Scientists who would fain seek oblivion of the very present facts of life by a total disregard of the circumstances which hem them in : possessed, beneath this transitory vesture of decay, of souls in harmony with God, let us, faithfully incredulous, cry shame on those who would call our every natural instinct, appetitive, philoprogenitive or altruistic, as the case may be, wicked and by its own nature immoral ; let us

rather be Scientific Christians, and, recognizing that, subject to all the laws of Nature, it is for us to enlist these laws for our own service and to treat mind and body as the organic machinery which an inscrutable Power has seen fit to set in motion for the attainment of that end which, since He is all good and absolute reason, we must needs think worthy of incalculable æons of evolutionary agony and groaning.

THE WHY AND THE WHEREFORE.

THERE be many that talk sententiously of the divorce of reason and religion ; religion, they say, quoting the words of a very great man, is an emotional morality, and, in order to the attainment of religion, one must depose reason and set up in its stead emotion, feeling—impulse.

Religion, they claim, is the refuge of the coward, of him who fears to trust the conclusions drawn by his reason and who, conscious of his own miserable incompleteness, his every sense crying out for something to worship, lays hold of the horns of an altar—any altar—irrationally trusting in he knows not what.

To us, the case seems far otherwise. After all, how far can reason take us ?

One billiard-ball, upon impact with another, produces motion ; but why ? can scientist or mathematician get behind this fact ? No, said Hume, and therefore we are at the mercy of our

senses, and must perforce trust in what we see and hear until at last we are deceived, for behind these no reason works.

No, says Lord Kelvin, behind such a fact we cannot get ; why one billiard-ball, upon impact with another, should produce motion, no scientist can tell.

But not because of this is there no reason behind ; therefore, says the greatest of English scientists, we must recognize in each several working of nature, a miracle, in that human reason cannot see why this should be so, or why that should not be so.

Upon human reason, an inscrutable Power has laid His Divine embargo, "Thus far and no further." "Thy will be done." For us it is to collect the innumerable manifestations of Thy will being done, and reverently to generalize therefrom what Thy will is ; for us it is not to ask why Thy will should be done, or wherefore Thou willest thus. Why can no good come, save out of evil ? Why did a power, all good and all powerful, create aught that was not an un-interrupted and eternal good ?

We do not know ; neither do we know why the earth is magnetic, why the vibration of molecules should produce heat, nor why "every body should continue in its state of rest or of uniform motion, in a straight line, except in

so far as it is compelled by forces to change that state."

But we do know that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God," and that "heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Word shall not pass away."



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